THE

YOUNG PHYSICIAN:

NARRATIVE FOUNDED ON FACTS.

BY MRS. PAXTON,

AUTHOR OF "THE VEIL LIFTED," ETC., ETC.

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TO

HER BELOVED BROTHER,

JAMES SCOULER, ESQ.,

FLORABANK,

HADDINGTON,

THE FOLLOWING PAGES ARE AFFECTIONATELY

INSCRIBED,

BY

THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE.

A PREFACE, in the present instance, is considered by the Author as, though not an unnecessary, an unmeaning thing; unmeaning inasmuch as one object of such she conceives were to explain why a narrative coming from her pen should be personated by so foreign a scribe as the individual purporting to be the writer of the following letters, and this she feels she cannot explain to herself; not except that the most of the incidents recorded, being taken from the memoranda of a departed brother, and what he himself acted a part in, the design was, on this account, the more in accordance with her own feelings; though with these she is aware a neutral party can be expected to have no fellow sympathy.

The chief object of any other prefatory remarks were to apologize for general and universal demerit throughout the book; but this, she perceives, were a task as endless as unavailing; whilst, to ask the reader's forbearance, were to ask more than he can be called upon to give. If, however, by the perusal of the following pages, grief, in even one instance, shall receive

a smile, or vice a rebuke; if one soul diseased by sin, of whatever dye, shall be led to believe on Him—faith in whom shall "make him whole," and the nature of which belief, however feebly, the writer has attempted to simplify and urge—if one of these objects be gained, the Author is more than willing to bear with the censure to which the imperfections of the volume subject it.

That such will be the result, she is, however, by no means sanguine in her expectations; her hope being greatly lower than her aim. The writer is, at the same time, aware that if it do not prove useful, it can hardly be expected to be found even entertaining; essay more than narrative in some instances, and fact more than fiction in all, having been studiously adhered to. On this account, the paucity of incident will, perhaps, be palliated. For the untasteful arrangement, as well as the meagre hand with which that incident is set forth, she has nothing to plead, nothing, at least, that can be urged as a reasonable extenuation.

THE YOUNG PHYSICIAN.

LETTER I.

MY DEAR ——,

I SHALL not soon forget the tender emotions you evinced at our separation, which untying the love-strings of my own heart, you were in all my thoughts as the coach drove swiftly on; and, during our long day's journey, not an incident that transpired, nor a feeling that was awakened, seemed interesting, except in so far as I conceived it might interest you when transferred to epistolary correspondence, on the fulness and punctuality of which you so abundantly charged me. Thus, ere night, I had a long catalogue of scenes, incidents, and reminiscences, ready to put on record; and, truth to tell, I thought them all tolerably important. But importance is a term of relative meaning. I was not half an hour in Edinburgh until these were speedily lost in what I conceived the importance of one, in which I soon became as strangely as unexpectedly involved, and to the particulars of which I shall confine myself, though what may be the

result I am yet ignorant. I am, at the same time, aware that "incident" and "adventure" are not good to travel by post. If cramped for room, they want interest; and if occupying too much, the reader invariably discounts his want of other matter at their expense; I shall endeavour, however, as much as possible, to avoid the prolixity that offends, and the brevity that neither courts nor finds acquaintance.

I had, as you know, resolved on lodging for the night in the inn adjoining the coach-office; but feeling enervated by the long and confined seat in the coach, I gave my luggage in charge to the waiter, and ordering coffee to be ready in half an hour, endeavoured to invigorate myself by a walk, the evening being altogether inviting. The west winds blew softly in the openings of the streets; the clouds had receded from the firmament; the moon and stars, illuminating the azure vault, and declaring the glory of their Maker, combined with all that is sweet in the serenity of such a night, to delight and elevate the contemplative mind—so far as the bustle and passing scenes of the thronged streets leave room for contemplation. But these, unlike our own sequestered lawn, which at even-tide is Beauty in repose, and unlike the music of the murmurs of our own lonely stream, or the symphony of the echoes of our romantic vale, aid not the student in his study, or meditation in the profoundness of her pathway. They, however, furnish other, if not

more useful resources for the mind ; nor the least of these, perhaps, is such an incident as that I have now to relate.

On leaving the inn, I had no sooner proceeded on my walk, than I began to contemplate the " lights and shadows" of the passing crowd—these as various as the roads they took, and their attire and their features more diverse than might have been supposed to belong to the same species. My interest was, however, but little arrested by the motley groups, until aroused by one whose countenance seemed sadder than the saddest, and whose attire gayer than the gayest of all the other passers-by. She was tall ; her step was stately, and her deportment dignified. Her brow was bold : but it was not brazen. Her eye was suffused with tears, which yet allayed not the fire that flashed in it—the fire so indicative of that first and convulsive stage of new-born grief which fancies the spirit may break, but may not bend. Foolish fancy ! which, with that spirit, shall yet be made to bow before the heavier wheels of grief's progression. Of all her features, her lips (unlike those of woman) seemed to yield first in the mental conflict. They were partially open, and I saw them move with a slight convulsion—as appeared to me from necessity urging on them some particular declaration which the heart proscribed.

I am thus minute, or, as you may think, fastidious, each feature not only being so decided in itself, but demonstrating its own peculiar quality

with such deep and palpable intensity. The lady also looked hurriedly, and, as I thought, guiltily on all she met; but the heedlessness with which she again averted her eye, subsequently persuaded me that calamity, and not guilt, prompted her movements; else had I, like the multitude, also "passed by."

I am aware that the inhabitant of the town, long accustomed to meet objects of interest or of commiseration, may at last see them as if he saw them not, or as if they bore not their Maker's impress, or were bound to him by no tie of affinity. With some, indeed, the discovery of one solitary act of duplicity, in one whom wretchedness had made reckless, may have induced the *convenient* belief that deceitfulness belongs to the whole of the hapless, the hopeless, and the homeless. With others, pity may have given place to disregard, and, after a few fruitless attempts to relieve the unfortunate, or to reclaim the erring, may have removed them to a greater distance from many a noble, though depraved soul, which alike mourning its depravity and its misery, falls in conscious degradation before the frowns of their disdain. But the man who is carried from the comparatively innocent and happy haunts of the country—who never sent the beggar from his door without his alms, nor ever heard the sigh which, if he could not stay, he at least did not essay to soothe—he, on first leaving the abodes of rural peacefulness, if with a heart yet unseared by

the world's ways, cannot look on misery without commiserating it, nor even on the saunter-stare without sympathy, and a wish to restore it to virtue. The ear saluted with the low rant of the sons of Belial, whom night has sent forth inflate with wine, on the one hand—or the eye offended with vice in its yet more anomalous form on the other—must, indeed, oftentimes lead the Christian man, whether an inhabitant of the city or of the sequestered hamlet, to put the question, "Can Christian charity do no more for these? If they die in their miseries, can conscience witness that I am innocent?"

Marvel not, then, if one so beset with grief, and withal so interesting, should have called forth my solicitude. I watched her movements, though keeping aloof, being alike disinclined to allow friendless, if virtuous sorrow to pass unbefriended, or to offer my sympathy to one who perchance had only assumed its semblance to beguile. But turning suddenly on her heel at the angle of a street, we met a third time, when I instinctively made a movement to address her. Her eye had caught mine; and, scarcely knowing why, I at once recoiled at the readiness with which she seemed prepared to listen to me, which feeling on my part the stranger had perceived, for she straightway turned as hurriedly and heedlessly from me as from the others.

"Madam!" I unconsciously articulated.—"Sir!" she answered; and fancying or fearing she was going to take my arm, I started back. But [illegible] un-

initiated manner, her youth, her noble deportment, the intelligent expression of her eye, with the resistless sorrow that suffused it, all combined to work upon my sympathies; and I hope higher than human feelings, or common principles also, operated on my mind. "If the sorrow of the injured or the oppressed, let me sympathize with, or redress it," thought I; "and if 'the wages of sin,' let me admonish it."

I should have said that after answering me with the monosyllable, "Sir!" the lady still stood, though apparently more from being bound to the spot than from any other cause. I meanwhile had retreated a few steps, intending to retire; but again advancing, "Accept my arm," I reluctantly stammered. "No, sir," she replied, "if sorrow, or a surmise that you had come to soothe it, have for a moment entranced me, think not that either sin or sorrow has yet made me to bend before the brow on which but now I saw disdain lurking."

Scarcely knowing what I said, I asked what sin or sorrow had brought a lady of her appearance to such a place at such an hour; and as she still stood speechless, and indeed motionless, I took her arm, and accompanied my enquiry with such remarks as I deemed suitable. But at last hastily disengaging herself, and her large tear-drops, which she "turned to sparks of fire," falling irresistibly,—"Thank you, sir," she said; "but were a sermon a sedative for the burnings of sorrow, I should prefer to read one, as

it fell first and fair from the lips of Him who was Himself meek and lowly—who never reproved sin with scorn, nor looked on sorrow with a sneer; and He, may I humbly remind you, is your Lord." And swift as were her words, she had left me more swiftly, but that holding her arm, "Madam," said I, "if appearances have deceived me, I am happy, I pray you to forgive one whose motives were sincere, and whose words were dictated by the religion he professes."

"Nay, sir," she answered, turning back, having now left me—"Nay, sir; had you the humility and the benevolence of true Christianity, you had not sneered even at depravity, nor wantonly trampled on a wound you could not mollify. Do not, therefore, take solace in self-righteousness; for had you been a good man, you had looked at sorrow ere you had reproved sin; and grief, instead of scorn, had filled your eye, when you deemed it looked upon iniquity."

I felt rebuked, feeling that I had not treated the stranger with that delicacy which her sorrow and her sex demanded, nor with the same meekness as had He whom my deportment had led her sarcastically to term "my Lord." My solicitude waxed also stronger for one who, even if *erring*—which I had no ground for believing—was yet so shrewd in observation, and fertile in the maxims of wisdom. I had moved to a little distance, and for a few moments we stood in silence. But recovering my

self-possession, I begged her to forgive any ungenerous expression I had let slip. This I did the more earnestly, for I wanted to pour the oil of heavenly consolation into the wounds of sorrow, or, if need were, to apply the Balm of Gilead to the deeper disease of sin. And, as has been truly said, "What is awful and alarming in Christianity should be softened and tempered by a persuasive tenderness; that religion be divested of whatever is unlovely and repulsive, that it may appear not only pure but gentle, not only majestic but amiable; equally favourable to the enjoyment and the communication of happiness." 'Tis, indeed, meet that "apples of gold" should be "set in pictures of silver." The purities of the gospel, in truth, never can be administered aright, wherever the shades of pride, or of incongruous feeling, defile the breath that holds them forth. Heaven's gold must be melted in an untarnished vessel. The Light of Life must be exhibited without a speck of adverse feeling resting on its disc.

She refused the offer of my arm. I, however, urged it on the grounds now alluded to. But though at last giving me her hand, the lady's ire subsided not. Albeit this I could not blame; for if proceeding from innocence being wronged, it was but righteous indignation; and if from the thorny sense of sin being reproved, human nature submits not soon to the reproof which, peradventure, comes

from a guiltier heart than its own, as the stranger might, indeed, well have conceived mine to be.

"My dear lady," said I, "Nature has made me your brother, and why should misery make us foes?"

"I was not aware that I had intruded my feelings, sir," she replied, "and ——"

"Your grief needs not tongue to tell its presence," I interrupted; "and if you will tell me its cause, I shall endeavour to mitigate or to remove it; and if I can do neither, I at least promise you a heart to sympathize with it."

"Yes! and sympathy mingled with scorn were in sooth a sovereign solace," she replied. To which, my rejoinder being expressed in serious accents, "Pray, sir, are you a clergyman?" she enquired.

"I am an immortal being, ma'am, and wish to be distinguished by no other appellation, but desire ever to be found acting that character well."

"Ah! my immortal sir!" she scornfully rejoined, "you shall be the burden of my surprise if you *do* act that character well. But the scene shifts. In the same play, man acts many different characters. To-morrow I shall find you acting a different part. The saint and the sinner act upon the same stage."

"They may indeed, madam, act upon the same stage," I replied; "but assuredly they are acting their parts in very different plays—the one performing his part in a fatal tragedy, that shall be succeeded by the never-ending scene of 'Lost for ever,' —the other, whilst performing his part in the drama

of this life, acting even now a part in that life of happiness which is to be enjoyed beyond the skies." My auditor making no reply, "Permit me, madam," I added, "if you have any reason to think you still belong to the former 'scene of acting,' and if you wish to avoid its misery—permit me to urge you, by all that is blessed in heaven, and by all that is dreadful in never-ending woe, to act a different part."

"To-morrow, sir," she answered, "or perchance another to-morrow it must be ere I can listen to your theology."

"Ah, madam! where is to-morrow?" I rejoined. "In another world. To thousands this is certain: the reverse is sure to none;" adding also that it was the truth I spoke—the truth of God, which neither could be affected by my insincerity nor by her unbelief. Hereupon I thought she listened; but again casting her head aloft, "Nay, my good sir," she answered, "you are not—you cannot be sincere. Farewell—I wish you much happiness; but never again sport with the feelings on which even sorrow itself frowns, nor ever judge the sequence without reference to the cause. I am miserable, and of ever again being happy I have no hope; but to be contemned by one who perchance can be as wicked as myself, without inheriting the same sensibility, is the throe of life's last joy." All this having been said in so much shorter time than in that I have related it, accompanied also with the abduction of

her arm, that I stood petrified; and whilst the last words seemed yet on the way to my ear, the speaker was out of my sight. Nor, on bethinking myself, could I trace the steps of the lost one; and, after a vain search of half an hour, I returned to my inn—the door of which she was, however, just passing.

Again greeting her respectfully, and once more offering her my arm, "Pray, sir, is it guilt or innocence ye seek?" she indignantly asked. "If saint ye be, I beseech you to mock not the one nor to beguile the other."

"Dear madam," I said, "Could I remove your sorrow with the sympathy I bear to it, I had then an argument in proof of my sincerity."

Hardly had I uttered these words, when, looking at me for a moment, and her countenance changing, "Forgive my lightness of speech," she said; "I was not wont to adopt such a procedure with which to brave my sorrow. But there is a point in human endurance to which the better feelings cannot or do not accompany us, and at that point I surely had arrived."

I said, "Perhaps not, except when upborne by Him whose strength is omnipotence, whose heart is love, and whose ways are the ways of loving-kindness." I also adverted to the power and to the glories of the cross, believing that however strong the strength of truth, even in itself, yet that truth, as connected with these, has a magic which no other argument can convey. Nor was I altogether mis-

taken. Bursting into a flood of tears, and her manner becoming subdued, "Is it true, then, that Heaven has heard my prayer?" she said—"the prayer which I supposed Heaven's indignation had dashed back upon the supplicant, by reason of the pride of the heart which uttered it!"

But it being neither a time nor a place for such topics, I asked if the lady was far from home, intimating that as it was late, I should be happy to see her to its precincts.

"Sir, I have no home," she replied, "and my lodging is one to which I cannot invite you." To this I answered, that if it was one involving either her peace or her character, and if she desired to leave it, I should, before we parted, provide her accommodation for the night.

The homeless, meditating a few moments on what I proposed, replied, in an anguish that made it more bitter by her endeavour to conceal it, "I believe, sir, you are sincere in all you say; and till the day of my death, I shall never forget your kindness. But—you are a man; and perhaps, by the imprudent burst of feeling to which I have given way, you have been moved to pity. Pity is a short-lived passion; and ere the sun again rise, you may wish you could recall your promise. I shall therefore leave you; and if, in the morning, you feel willing or inclined to befriend me, I shall be happy to see you at my lodging, Mrs. Black's, 9, E—— Street."

I should have said that the lady had no sooner opened her lips to me, than her high English accents told that she was at least far from her native home. And now, amongst many other enquiries respecting her distance from that home, but to which I obtained no direct information, I asked if she had any friend or acquaintance in town.

"No, not a friend here—or on earth, if you are not one," was the reply. And the thought which erewhile I had endeavoured to impress on her mind, recurring to my own—that "To-morrow" might be to us in another world—I could not, late as it was, leave the desolate one without once more adverting to where peace and consolation are to be found; and walking with her along one of the retired streets, I again directed her mind to Him who offers friendship to the friendless, and who is peculiarly "the STRANGER'S SHIELD."

"Happy, heavenly-minded man!" she exclaimed, "happy in your ignorance. But a few months ago, and I had heard you speak on these subjects with pleasure—with pleasure; for I might then have made them my own. But now it only augments my misery to hear of delights which may no more be mine."

"Madam," I replied, "I am aware that a life of alienation from God excludes man from happiness; but I know also that sinners are brought near to God by the blood of the son of His love; and that, if he had not died to save sinners, even the chief of

sinners, I as well as you had been an eternal exile from happiness, holiness, and God. And let me tell you that in those days of comparative innocence, to which you allude with so much emotion, you had not one protection from hell, nor one ground of hope for heaven, which you have not at this moment, there being only one character which warrants our coming to Christ—which is just that of a sinner. Nor is there any way in which sin can be cancelled except in believing on His name, or taking Him as the surety for our sin. There is, moreover," said I, "no hour so suitable for our doing so as the present, and there is no certainty that another shall be given us." Putting a few religious tracts into her hand, which she readily promised to read, we now parted, having first, however, conducted the unprotected one to the house of Mrs. Black, where she takes the name of Miss Maria Millicent, though whether real or assumed, I do not know.

I returned to my inn, where I now write, and have retired to my sleeping-chamber, but not to sleep, Maria Millicent's sobbings still falling on my ear—her weeping despairful eye, as it made its last dart at mine as we parted at the door of her lodging, still as vividly present to my mind as if it were impressed on my retina.

The silence of midnight is long past; I have also outstretched the utmost limits of a letter; and must bid you adieu."

LETTER II.

My dear ——,

I know not what you may have thought of my feelings, as delineated in my letter of yesternight; but I confess that my own opinion of the matter this morning was different from what it was when I wrote you twenty-four hours ago. My first sensation of consciousness, on awaking, was a dim idea of having an unpleasant task to perform—recollection soon telling me what it was, and *something* also hinting that it might be one drawing heavier on my pecuniary resources than might be agreeable, with other attendant inconveniences yet more unpleasant. So it is that feelings so often turn the wheel of opinion; and feelings *turn* so much themselves, when excitement is succeeded by reflection, and words have to be seconded by those actions in which uncertainty and unpleasantness are alike involved. Thus I thought of my engagement with a heavier sensation when the task immediately before me had

nothing but calmness to lighten it, and required prompt action for its accomplishment. But, no! it had more than calmness to lighten it, and the duty required for its performance was sweetened by a life-inspiring hope; for, aside from the feelings of benevolence, I still thought of the value of an immortal soul—of the joy of adding one gem more to my Redeemer's crown. And, indeed, when on descending to the breakfast room, one gentleman eagerly grasping the newspapers, and another enquiring, "What news?" I felt as if no intelligence were interesting, except what belonged to such a subject, or to such an enterprize as that uppermost in my own mind. With a ray, faint indeed, but I trust shot from the sunshine of immortality across my heart, I felt, for the moment, as if all beneath the sun was, or ought to be, subservient to the salvation of even one soul. Thus I very soon became as impatient to fulfil my engagement, as erst I had been to escape it.

I did not, however, wish to make my visit too early; for though the rules of punctilio might, perhaps, have been dispensed with, I yet considered this deference due to one who evidently belonged to those circles where refinement becomes habit, and etiquette a thing of intuition—new-made adversity being also quick to feel the slightest infringement on respect.

The hour, however, arriving, I proceeded on my mission, but only to be disappointed; the servant who opened the door informing me, that the lady for

whom I enquired had left the house two hours before. Unwilling to believe that Miss Millicent, with all her faults, could be so base as to deceive me, I again questioned the servant, but only to be informed that there was no misunderstanding. Whilst pondering what to do, a tall, overgrown, elderly woman rolled herself into the passage, and drawing down her dark eye-brows, narrowly scrutinized me, from the crown of my head to the sole of my foot, and thence again upwards. I addressed myself to her; but she merely confirmed the servant's statements; whereupon, I could not help blaming myself for having so fastidiously delayed my visit. But, at this moment, a damsel of genteel and sober appearance presenting herself, intimated that Miss Millicent had left a message with her for a Mr. ——, whom she expected to call, and requesting me, if that was my name, to step into her room. On this, the elderly female, scrutinizing me once more, seemed to demur. "It is of no consequence, I presume, whether Miss Millicent's message be delivered or not," she said, addressing the other, though scanning my appearance the while.

I had, however, entered too keenly into the spirit of my enterprize to be deterred by an unwelcome reception; and accompanying the young woman into an elegantly furnished room, she put into my hand a sealed letter, which she said Miss Millicent requested I might read before I left the house. I opened and read as follows:—

"My dear Sir,

"You will, no doubt, think that I have made a most ungrateful return for your kindness, in not waiting for your visit. I have not, however, shunned you from being either forgetful of, or ungrateful for your kind intentions. You have poured light into my soul, though, perchance, only to make its 'darkness visible.' It has, however, told me of a brighter sunshine, too bright, it may be, for my eye ever to look upon. Yet, let me tell you, you have rent the adamant—it is, at least, broken—and who knows but the dew of heaven may now fall upon the heart which, with its adamantine walls hitherto uncleft, alike resisted the shower and the sunshine—the thunder and the tempest? But why do I thus hope? 'Hardness' already re-indurates the heart, the feelings of which yet dictate these lines. Be all this as it may, this morning I cannot possibly see you. I beg you will give me credit, at least, for uprightness of intention when the appointment was made, as I did then sincerely intend waiting for you."

The following was written in French, but which, knowing you dislike that language, I take the liberty of translating for you:—"The young woman who will deliver this to you is, like myself, far from heaven, and far from happiness. But if, as holier men have deemed, there is a world beyond the grave, you will hold her salvation as dear as you held mine; you will be as ready to pour into her grief-stricken heart that consolation which the adamant—the pride,

of mine resisted, notwithstanding the strong arm with which you assailed the one, and the liberal hand with which you administered the other. She may seem to spurn your counsel; but Emily Dunn is naturally thoughtful, and will reflect on what you say. She may feign, or feel, indifference; but there is an eloquence in truth which the lightest, or the hardest heart cannot altogether withstand. I beseech you, do your utmost to convince her of danger, or to inform her of happiness; and, if you are sincere, as I trust you are, truth will find its own reward, which the God of truth shall crown. I pray you may never need the reward of man.

"I am,

"Your obliged,

"MARIA MILLICENT."

The acuteness and good sense which Miss Millicent displayed in the conversation I had with her, made me anxious to know something of her past life; but on perusing this letter, particularly the last section, which was written in a free and elegant style, my anxiety became more intense. And addressing myself to Miss Dunn, "Miss Millicent has indeed left the house, then?" I said.

"Yes, sir, she left by half past nine this morning, and would tell none why or where she was going."

"Was Miss Millicent wont to manage her affairs so secretly?" I asked.

"I never saw Miss Millicent, sir, until three weeks ago, when she came first to this house, during which period she never re-crossed the threshold until last night, and scarcely ever exchanged words with another than myself. Maria yet never told me how or why she came here, and on going she neither told me *where* or *why*."

"Miss Millicent was not very friendly then?" I replied.

"To me, sir, Maria acted the part of the kindest friend; but last night, and this morning, she acted most of all in that character." Miss Dunn also informed me that her companion had only left the house at the angry urging of the landlady, on the preceding evening, and that in doing so she was altogether distracted with the contending passions of pride, grief, and anger, insomuch that Miss Dunn trembled lest Maria should betake herself to some means of self-destruction. "She, however," Miss Dunn continued, "returned about eleven o'clock, and hurriedly entering my sleeping-room, in which I was sitting, took me by the hand, and with a look that reached to my heart,—'Emily, O Emily!' she said, 'to-morrow! Where is to-morrow? Foolish girl! 'tis in another world. And CALVARY, Emily! Have you ever seen—experienced the wondrous things that are to be found there?' Miss Millicent," the narrator continued, "then laid aside her bonnet, and covered her face, and clasped her hands, and for

a long season spoke not a word. 'My dear Maria,' I then said,—'My dear Maria, what has befallen you?' 'What has befallen me, Emily!' she at last replied. 'An emissary of Satan sent me out of the house to-night, and an angel expressly sent from heaven brought me back.' Excuse me, sir," Miss Dunn hesitatingly continued; "I foolishly imagined that Miss Millicent had merely been enamoured of some youth, whose blandishments had drawn the latter appellation; and I replied, I feared it must have been a fallen angel, and begged her not to invest her affections in a character so prone to revolt. But again fixing her eye upon me, 'Emily,' she said, 'how long will ye speak vanity? The angel of whom I speak came to warn me of sin, not to encourage it—to break the adamant, not to harden it; and to tell me that there are love and joy which you nor I have ever tasted, or shall ever know.'"

"You were Miss Millicent's confidant, then?" I said.

"I was her companion, sir; but, until last night, she told her griefs to none, and I believe she had no joys to tell."

I then asked how Miss Millicent generally employed her time?

"She often took up a book, sir," answered my informant; "but, with a very short perusal, would throw it aside, bitterly remarking, how strange it was, that notwithstanding all the books which authors *pretended* to write, none had yet written one

sufficiently interesting to engage a person's attention; and then, hastily opening her desk, she would snatch up her pen, as if that peculiar specimen of authorship were speedily to proceed from it."

"Your companion was then an author?" I said.

"O no, sir!—Maria *only* wrote poetry," was the reply; the speaker's simplicity of manner being only equalled by the sovereign contempt in which she seemed to hold the muses.

I was moved at the recital of what I conceived to betoken great anguish of mind on the part of the poetess, which Miss Dunn perceiving, added, "You may feel, sir. If you have been accessary to Miss Millicent's inquietude, whether last night or formerly, you have much to account for." Though not wishing to disclose my character until learning something more of Maria, I unhappily replied to the insinuation with such impatience as made the narrator more reserved in her communications. I, however, at last convinced the offended that I only resented the deed, not the person who surmised it.

Miss Dunn, nevertheless, treated the religious truths which I now attempted to impress upon her mind with an apathy never evinced by Miss Millicent, treating all I could say with the most supreme indifference. Before leaving, I pulled out a small copy of the New Testament, with a few religious tracts, from my pocket, and begged her to accept the latter, which she did; and laying her fingers on the New Testament with an appearance of curiosity,

asked a sight of it. On opening it, her countenance, however, changed, and returning it with a look of ineffable contempt, "*Once*, the circumstance of your having that book, with your other conduct, had convinced me of your sincerity, sir," was the sum total of her remark.

Knowing, however, that "the word of God is quick and powerful, sharper than a two-edged sword," I begged her to accept it also, imploring her to read it and to think upon its author. And, finding I could obtain no more information respecting Miss Millicent, I was making my escapade, when the landlady again rolling herself into the lobby, and curtseying amazingly low, presented me with a bill, purporting to be board and lodging for some unknown person at one guinea per week, with sundry other items for laundress, *fille de chambre*, *&c.*, *&c.* Bowing in return to *her* obsequious motions, I intimated my passiveness of disposition on the subject by tossing the paper upon a marble slab at my elbow and retreating. And thus, for the present at least, terminates my adventure.

I cannot conclude my letter, however, without reference to an incident which occurred yester-evening, but which I did not think worthy of notice, until a certain coincidence, which to-day has been added to it, leads me to presume on its being connected with my interview with Miss Millicent—with whom I had not been long in conversation until I perceived that we were dogged by a person of

a peculiarly gentleman-like mien. This, however, surprised me not; and even though he followed me to the inn, which was a mile from where I parted with Maria, I yet thought nothing of the matter—nothing until this morning, when descending to the public room, there sat the same individual. When I ordered breakfast, he did the same—when I prepared to go out, he also did so, and, moreover, dogged me until I entered Mrs. Black's house. Nor was this all: on leaving it, my ambiguous friend forthwith emerged from an hotel on the opposite side of the street. Stepping up to him, at last, "Pray sir," said I, "are you on the Constabulary Force? and am I the person for whom you are in search?" Cavalier and gentleman-like as was his appearance, he seemed to crouch beneath this interrogatory; but soon recovering that self-possession so rarely a stranger in the breast of the high-born,—"Sir," he answered, "where no offence was meant, be thankful that none is taken at such boldness." So saying, he was retiring; but detaining him, "Surely, sir," I replied, "you are too much of a gentleman to suppose that it requires actual injury to constitute offence, or that refinement, not to speak of uprightness, can brook such movements as belong but to the ignoble or the guilty."

"You speak of the ignoble sir," my antagonist rejoined: "'tis for *them* to take offence where none is meant; but to the great-minded and the good belong the virtue that covers even the semblances that betray wrong."

I confess I had girded myself for a contest, which I am sorry to say my blood was now warm enough to give fire to; but with so much meekness, yet with so much dignity, was his rejoinder given, that as I walked on my way, I mused on the words of the Wise Man,—"He that is slow of anger is better than the mighty, and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city."

This part of the gentleman's conduct has not, however, expounded his proceedings, especially as I understand he has been making particular inquiries respecting me at the waiter. He has also been in the public room to-night, again eyeing my movements; but I leave the inn soon, and hope to have more privacy when in my *own house*. 'Till then, farewell.

LETTER III.

My dear——,

"Facts surpass imagination," even in life's exterior movements; but how much more could we draw aside the screen and examine the breakings of its mighty wheel, with all the vast machinery of sorrow, sin, and pain, which meet not the eye in merely viewing its visible performances! And, though some few there are who creep through the world still maintaining the smooth, as noiseless, tenor of their way—alike impervious to the ills, and unsusceptible to the charms of life—who, as if having been born on a plain at the further end of which their grave was dug, accomplish their even pilgrimage; whilst as regards the mountain and the dell, the rugged rock, or in sooth any or all of the other varieties of life's strata, they are alike "unknowing and unknown:" yet do these merely form the "exceptions" to the general principles. The highest colours, and the deepest shades, are still found in the real, not in

the imagined picture of life. The imaginative colouring of the novel and the romance may, indeed, furnish rich food for a morbid sensibility, which, because it imposes no legal claim on the sympathy it excites, nor leaves the trouble of action or of reflection behind, is the more readily devoured; but 'tis food which, ministering to a false appetite, imparts no healthful glow to the feelings, nor any elevated motive to energy and action; whilst, like every other false stimulant, it deteriorates by use, and weakens according to the ratio of excitement it superinduces. The sympathies squandered on the wastes of visionary woe, leave no due material wherewith to minister to the afflictions of humanity; and the imagination, fevered by a pulse that beats not in unison with nature, becomes not only impatient of the duties of life, but passive to the aspirations of mental elevation. And whilst the sigh is ever ready for the calamity that never happened, and the sympathy ever redolent for that which never should have happened, the days and years of every-day life are treated with disdain, or looked upon as a vulgar and uncalled-for visitant, if not as an intolerable incubus on man's allotted span..

"The poet's eye, in a fine phrenzy rolling,
Doth glance from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven;
And, as imagination bodies forth
The forms of things unknown, the poet's pen
Turns them to shapes, and gives to airy nothing
A local habitation and a name."

Yet so it is. The axiomate proverb with which I commenced still holds true. Life's darkest miseries are still found in its *own* deep well, and its greatest varieties in its *own* picture gallery. The incident calling forth these remarks is not, indeed, perhaps drawn from the deepest part of the well, nor variegated with the highest varieties which are to be found *above water*. But the mind is its own world; it has excited my interest, and such as it is, I relate it.

Perusing this morning's newspapers, my eye caught the following advertisement:—" If the lad who left her lodging in E—— Street, at half past 9 o'clock, on Wednesday morning, the 18th of November last, will meet A. E. at 8 o'clock to-morrow evening, in the same street and at the same place where they parted last, A. E. hopes to be able to make arrangements which shall be mutually agreeable to the lady and the advertiser."

Doubting not that this was intended to meet the eye of Miss Millicent, and considering the many chances that she might never see it, I was more than ever anxious to find out her retreat. I say more than ever; for, once and again, and at the same hour, have I visited the place when and where I first met one of such singular appearance and demeanour, if haply I might meet her there again. Nor has my solicitude ever diminished, notwithstanding the many months that have elapsed since our first, our only interview. As a dernier resource,

I bethought me of Miss Dnnn. peradventure she might have heard something of her old companion. And, notwithstanding my repugnance to encounter another scrutiny of the landlady, or even to ask the confidence of Miss Dunn, I once more wended my way to her lodging.

"Step up stairs, sir," said the servant who answered the door, and without waiting to hear my enquiry, ushering me into a sleeping-chamber, the bed in which was still in disorder, whilst beyond it sat a sickly female, wrapt in a blanket, and who, on my entry, covered her face with her hands, and wept. Before I had time to make any particular enquiry, the landlady, hurrying breathlessly up stairs, called out, "It was a mistake, sir, Miss Oliphant took it by mistake;" but, coming near and surveying me, and changing her countenance, and also her tones— "I perceive, sir," she said, "the servant has made a mistake in supposing you to be our *family* physician; would you please to step down stairs?" The mental distress of the invalid, with the ***suspicious*** alarm of Mrs. Black, made me feel doubly interested for the sick one, and I wished she had been my own patient. I had, however, no alternative, but to retire at the matron's mandate.

The servant conducting me to the sitting-room, I enquired for Miss Dunn, but was told she had left the house only yesterday. Perceiving something of a peculiar appearance in the servant, however, I began to question her more particularly; when Mrs.

Black, with her bushy eye-brows and angry eyes, again presented herself; having been, as I perceived, listening to the few enquiries I had been making. "I have to inform you, sir, that I cannot afford to keep a servant for the pastime or instruction of such partial friends," was her unceremonious intimation. Nettles and thistles entered my veins at the mention of the term "friend." I yet answered that my errand was at least friendly; "We do not wish any such friendship," being her reply. "My good lady," I said, "you mistake my character and my object. I do assure you I bear you no ill-will. And why should I? We are fellow-sinners in the same wicked world. The same God made us, and the same clod shall cover us." To my astonishment, the matron's frown was suddenly changed to a smile; and, curtseying most prodigiously. she begged my pardon.

Following up the remarks which happily had called forth such a pleasing change, "Yes, ma'am," I added; "and the same Saviour died for us; it was that He might alike save men from misery and sin; His example and precept having also taught that all men should study the happiness and welfare of each other; it was that I might, peradventure, be conducive to the happiness of a fellow-mortal that I now enquire for Miss Dunn."

The matron, looking most uncertain and incredulous, asked if I was a clergyman? To which, answering in the negative, she begged me to explain myself. And, not knowing whether the desired

information was in reference to Miss Dunn or to the few hints I had thrown out, I thought I would begin with the latter. "The Saviour's life was one of purity and good-will to men, without which there is no happiness even in this life,"—I had proceeded, when my auditor hastily informed me that she had an engagement. I said I was sorry I had intruded; and besought her, if she could, to inform me how or where I might find Miss Dunn? "What and if I could?" she deliberately asked. I said my ultimate object was to find Miss Millicent, mentioning also the advertisement. "Then, sir, I have to inform you that I neither furnish matter for the policeman's register-book nor for the city missionary's diary," was the haughtily given reply.

This petty triumph, as Mrs. Black doubtless conceived it to be, only encreasing my solicitude, I felt inclined to be angry; but, remembering that "the laughter of fools is as the crackling of thorns under a pot," I retorted not. And shaking the dust off my feet as I left the house, "Was this," thought I, "indeed the home of the high-minded Maria Millicent—or even of the more meek-eyed Emily Dunn, who, with all her faults and all her crimes, was yet endued with many of those inobtrusive graces which bear the marks of genuine effeminancy, though perhaps hardened by those wrongs which give flint to the feelings, asperity to the blood, and make even bashfulness bold? Alas!" thought I, "that he, the self-styled lord of creation, should so deteriorate and

abuse earth's fairer form, as that she should ever be brought to consider such a home her only alternative —that fellow-mortals should be allowed thus to wrong one another—that beings created in their Maker's image should thus, by oppression, be driven to cast off that nature with which their Maker endowed and adorned them, and that the oppressor considereth not that the "cries of those which have reaped have entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth!" And who or what is woman?" said I. "Of what contrarient feelings does her nature partake, who repudiating, and justly repudiating the sin of her own sex, can yet smile on the betrayer?—who, leaving the hopeless, homeless, outcast to die in her shame, or to dive deeper into iniquity, can yet with open arms receive him who was partner and pioneer of the guilt?"

Reaching home, I read the advertisement a second time, vainly conceiving I might discover the street or meeting-place alluded to, though, even could I have done so, I knew not that Miss Millicent would be there.

"But if the spiritual welfare, or even the temporal happiness of the individual be merely my aim, why thus," you say, "concentrate my anxiety in one object? that going out to the streets and to the lanes I shall there find the sick and the halt, the maimed and the blind." Yet why, I retort, feel we more for the FALL or even for the *wound*, it may be, of one *known* to us than for the slaughter of all the others

—all the thousands falling wth him on the battle-field?" Because we know *him,* and because the number of the others being too vast for our limited conceptions, we are unable to bring it home to them, and hence too often do we dismiss the subject. Thus I *know* Maria Millicent; I have at least seen her sorrow; I have also in some measure anatomized it; and I know that vulgar grief cannot be vulgarly borne by the lofty and the learned. Nor do I conceive that my solicitude for her is too ardent, but that my apathy for other pilgrims of sin and woe is inconceivably culpable.

But I write not for my own vindication. Having related the incidents which induced me to lift my pen, I conclude my letter.

LETTER IV.

My dear ———,

How indelible are first and sudden impressions, especially when stamped upon the yet unlettered tablet of the heart! How indelible! though, verily, how much that is striking in succeeding events do we meet to cover them, as we still steer onward in the march of life! 'Tis two years to-day since I wrote you of my interview with Miss Millicent. Since then I have witnessed many scenes in life's chequered lot. I have noted the strange pranks of fortune—servants riding and princes walking on foot—worthlessness prospering and worth pining in want—yea, the foolish one exalted, and the wise man constrained to bow to him. I have seen grief in all its phases, from the mourner that wept unseen, to him the publicity of whose sorrow made sorrow doubly deep—from him the shafts of whose suffering were cruelly driven by another's arm, to the still greater victim of pity who had himself laid a suicidal

hand on all that gave life joy. I have seen pride humbled, loves separated, indigence contemned, age scorned by youth, and the sensitive made to bear their scorn on their brow, or read it posted in the market-place. These, with the many other ills allied to this world of sin and sorrow, I have seen since the period referred to. Yea, these even within the wheel of fortune I have witnessed; but what have I not noted beyond it? I have seen the joy of strength laid prostrate in a moment, wisdom overtaken with insanity, beauty hurried on to dust and ashes, and I have seen the grave untimely close upon the loved one.—Far more! I have seen the sinner *dic unconverted*, and the self-righteous *go down to the chambers of death with a lie in his right hand.* These all have I seen, and yet no scene or event has been written on my heart with such an enduring pen as were the sorrows of Maria Millicent,

So far as man can be his own impartial judge, I may say that solicitude for her soul was the inspiring cause of these feelings; and yet when comparing my concern for Maria with that for Emily Dunn, her companion in trial, who though apparently in a like perilous state, was yet seldom in my thoughts, and whose features memory had even given to forgetfulness—when making this estimate of my feelings in reference to the one and the other, I have to acknowledge how hard it is for man to jndge aright of himself—how imperative it is to allow conscience, the candle of the Lord, to shine on all his sideways and path-

ways, from the beginning to the end; how it betides him to scrutinize his motives; and how needful that these, with all the actions that flow from them, should be purified by the incense of a sacrifice that is divine!

These reflections have been suggested to my mind by the passing incidents of the bye-gone day.

Accompanying a friend, this morning, from Edinburgh to Newhaven, who intended prosecuting his journey by steam-boat, we observed two genteelly dressed females walking quickly before us. The one was young; the other advanced in years, and wore the garb of widowhood. As they appeared to be walking faster than their strength enabled them, we supposed them to be on an expedition similar to our own; and the driver of the omnibus, which at that moment drove past, taking no notice of their hailing him, common humanity moved us to offer them a seat in our carriage, which being thankfully accepted, we soon learned from them that the elder female intended sailing from Newhaven, and that her daughter was merely accompanying her to that place. During the short time we were together, before reaching the quay, the conversation turning upon religion, the widow seemed both glad and able to speak upon that subject. On reaching Newhaven, the young woman complained of violent pain in her side; and my friend and I accompanying her into one of the houses adjacent, we found her complaint symptomatic of inflammation. She was bled, and, in a

short time, felt quite relieved. The boat being now ready to sail, and her mother anxious to proceed with it, but, at the same time, reluctant to leave her daughter under such circumstances, I assured her that there was nothing to be feared in her daughter's case, also promising to convey the young woman to Edinburgh, and to render her further medical assistance, if necessary. On this, she hastily called me aside, there being little time to lose, and, with the tear glistening in her eye, took me by the hand, and (however flatteringly) said that from the little conversation she had had with me, she was persuaded I was a gentleman and a Christian, and she had, therefore, confidence in what I promised, and hoped I would endeavour to do good to her daughter's soul, as she was in great distress of mind. I promised. She again repeated her solemn charge, praying that I might have a better reward than she could give, and returning to her daughter, breathed a mother's benediction, and went on board. I took farewell of my friend, and, with the widow's charge on my heart, and her blessing on my head, conveyed her daughter to Edinburgh.

By the time we reached her dwelling, the shaking of the carriage having considerably fatigued her, I had no opportunity for conversation. But returning in the evening, as I had promised, to prescribe for her malady, and remembering the injunction of her mother, and, I trust, also the example of Him who went about continually doing good, I

directed her mind to the only well-spring of true consolation—faith in Him who died upon the tree; when the sigh that escaped with her breathing, and the languor that clouded her eye, but too plainly told that she had not yet drunk from the cisterns hewn from the living rock. I asked what books she read. She replied, "The Bible," and putting her hand below her sofa-pillow, drew out a tract, on which, though seeming to have been subject to frequent perusal, I recognized a latin prescription of my own hand-writing on its margin, which I obliviously recollected to have casually written on the day on which I gave the tracts to Miss Millicent. I therefore asked her, with a beating bosom, from whom she had received it. But she merely replied, "An unknown gentleman." The tract was entitled, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ," and I asked if she had complied with its express injunction. She replied, "I fear not." I said, "Why will ye not believe and *be happy*?" Putting a New Testament into my hand, "Because," said she, "that book enjoins holiness, and I am unholy." It was the Testament I gave to Emily Dunn, in recognizing which, I recognized the person to whom I had given it. I turned to the window to conceal my feelings, and to convince myself that I was not mistaken; and on certifying, from various pencil-marks which I had made on it when it was my pocket companion, that it was the same, I asked if she had long sought pleasure or profit from reading that Book. She

replied she had not, but that, about two years ago, it had been put into her hands by a gentleman. I said, "Two years are a long time to have been in possession of a gold mine, without digging for the ore," and that if she had dug for it, she certainly had found it, and, finding it, had found peace and joy to her soul. Two and twenty years are a longer time, sir," she replied; "such is the term of my pilgrimage; and from the day that I knew my right hand from my left, I have known that gold—Heaven's own gold was contained there; yet I not only have not dug for it, bnt I have, I fear, refused to accept it when presented at my feet."

Reverting to her former statement, which the unexpected recognition of my Testament had surprised me from, "And so you cannot, or will not, believe on Jesus Christ and 'be saved,' because you are unholy?" I said. "Only too good a reason, sir," was the reply. "But know ye not what the Bible tells us?" said I, "that it is faith which purifieth the heart and worketh by love? Until believing on Jesus Christ as your Saviour and your perfect righteousness, you never will, and never can obtain holiness. Hence it is, that with all your sins in you and around you, on your head and in your heart, you must come at once to the cross, and casting them into the depths of the Redeemer's blood, take hold of His righteousness, or His surety for sin, as your *own* and your ALL; and thus—thus alone, can you

obtain holiness, or know the peace and the joy that are in believing."

"I alike fear to *believe*, or to entertain that joy and peace whilst sinful and continuing in sin," Miss Dunn replied. "My dear friend," said I, "you fear an impossibility. This heaven-derived joy, or the faith that imparts it, could not dwell with a continuance in sin. There is, besides, the God-given guide within, that would preclude your thus enjoying it. But more than this I have to tell you; there is an exalting, a soul-purifying influence in believing these truths, which leads, and which alone leads, the individual, not only to overcome sin, but to hate it—not only to love salvation, but the means by which it is obtained. Nor can this purifying, sin-destroying influence be obtained but at the cross, the only medium of spiritual gifts, and the only meeting-place of God with sinful man; nor will it avail you to come to that cross without *accepting* the blessings there presented--without implicitly believing in the work that was there *finished*."

During the latter part of these observations, I perceived Miss Dunn unceremoniously, as I thought, turning over the leaves of her New Testament, as in search of something she could not find; but at last succeeding, I must say, that it was with an air of satisfaction as much as of inquietude, that she pointed out to me that passage, "No man can come unto me, except the Father, which hath sent me, draw him." Pointing to the succeeding verse, wherein

it is implied that this "drawing" is by being "taught of God," I told her that this *teaching* is by the Spirit of God, and that it is written, "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?" I intimated also, that whilst thus none need to wait or to delay for that Spirit, neither must she be herself an inactive agent in the work, that she must respond to His voice and yield to every good emotion—that whilst He knocked, she must open the door; that His visit must be reciprocated—"I will sup with him and *he with Me*."

Recollecting that I had stated similar truths to Miss Dunn at our first interview, and wishful to know if they had been, in any measure, as "seed sown by the wayside," I said, I trusted she was not altogether ignorant of these doctrines; at the same time stating that a knowledge, without the application of them, would neither give peace nor safety.

She then gave me a particular account of what she said she had heard from a gentleman two years before; stating also, that though she had betaken herself to divers ways to forget them, yet had she never been able to dispel them entirely from her mind.

I told her that I was the person to whom she referred, and that the Testament I held in my hand was once my pocket companion. For a few minutes she was overpowered; and after recovering herself,

and loading me with expressions of gratitude, she proceeded to excuse or to palliate her conduct at our first meeting.

" Do not think, sir, that my natural feelings were in accordance with the deportment I then evinced. But even the trampled worm will turn again. Wrongs had made me bold, and miseries had made me all but mad. And sin, operating upon the destructive passions these engendered, wrought in me a spirit of recklessness and defiance---a spirit of hatred to man, and at variance with the nature of woman. I felt also a spirit of hardening the heart against God, such a spirit had wrongs wrought in me ; such, sir, have they wrought in thousands and ten thousands more, the burden of whose sin has pressed them to an early though unlamented grave."

At this the speaker wept, and I replied, " It is good that there is hope in Israel concerning even this thing," adding also that *repented* sin sits light upon the conscience, sorrow for it being even sweet unto the soul. " Ah, sir !" she answered, " but how many, goaded on by the temptations of the evil one, and by the scorn of their fellow-mortals, find no room for sorrow for sin---as *sinned* against God, but merely as having procured their own wretchedness ! and thus hopeless and homeless, for, at best, the place of scorn is no home, though even this in many cases is not provided, thus uncared for and forlorn, they still seek sin, yet not for solace, but to harden

the heart against the endurance of its misery, or, perchance, to provide the shelter, which yet refers not to a home."

"How unhappy," I said, "that individuals so circumstanced, instead of betaking themselves to such an unwise and mournful alternative, fled not to Him who, whatever the aggravations of the case, upbraids no returning penitent; and in whose Father's House are many mansions prepared for those who love Him!"

The peculiarity of the circumstannes attendant on our first interview seemed, however, still uppermost in the mind of the self-condemned; and, in the fulness of her heart on that subject, she seemed unconsciously to slide into a personal history, the object of which was evidently intended to explain, or to extenuate, the circumstances connected with the situation in which I had formerly found her.

"My parents were respectable, and in easy circumstances," she said, in reply to some enquiry I had been naturally led to make; "but my father dying when I was seventeen years old, I thought it my duty to do something for myself and for my mother, I accordingly came to Edinburgh, and entered a situation as lady's maid, where, for two years, I received many marks of my lady's favour. At last, he on whose arm I leaned my love and life, stretched out that arm to poison all that is prized by woman, or dear to humanity. In the madness of my misery, I unhappily came to the resolution to hide myself and my grief from my mother, aud my scorn from

my acquaintances.---Thus making misery more miserable."

As I write in order, it may be as well to stop here, to note that my feelings were like to have carried me afloat on what, in such cases, is, I fear, too prevalent an error---that of overlooking individual guilt in the wrongs that accompany it, or in supposing that the fire of just indignation at the injurer kindles a sacrificial flame for sin—sin which, whether accompanied with injury, with shame, or other grievance, is *still* the *sin against God.* My feelings, like those of many, were well-nigh carried away on this tide of popular deception; but conscience, Heaven's vicegerent, here sent them back to remind the injured that her own sin had also been noted in Heaven; that in the eye of the Holy One, no pretext could palliate it; that cruelty, though inflicted through a source the most aggravating, could in nowise cover it; and that the blood of atonement alone could cancel it.

"I know it," replied Miss Dunn, "I know it, sir; and, though what you stated in our first interview partly convicted me of sin, and also instructed me in the way of obtaining release from it, I nevertheless gave myself up to hardness of heart, and to utter hopelessness, which was encouraged by one, a Miss Oliphant, a companion in grief.

"We had often told onr sorrows to one another," she continued, "and often silence evinced the burden of that grief, which words could not tell. Nor

cared we for telling it; for though sorrow may at first find solace in the interchange of feelings, yet when despair darkens the theme, mutual complainings ere long become irksome. At last my companion began to throw out mysterious hints about the only redress for woman's wrongs, and the only antidote for woman's woe. She spoke dark things about the utmost endurance to which humanity could, or was called upon to submit, referring also, with vehemence, to that mental agony beyond the vulgar ken, of which great minds only are susceptible, and said it was never intended by Him who gave them greatness, that they should submit to such vulgar miseries. I did not fully comprehend her meaning; and though an instinctive tremor came over me, my looks still said, 'What do you mean?' Perceiving which, she took me by the hand to tell me; but a convulsive emotion played upon her lips, and she was silent. Her heart was full, but she wept no tears. There was madness in her eye, yet had not reflection departed from her brow. There was restlessness in her movement, but firmness of purpose was stamped on every feature. We sat in silence, though the breast of both was full of words. Braving her feelings, however, Miss Oliphant at last replied, 'Emily, do you not understand me?—Say, my sister in sorrow, shall we not go together?' I now asked, in plain, but tremulous accents, what she meant; but she was silent, and seemed paralyzed.—'You cannot but understand me,' she ultimately faultered; when,

not her words, but the unearthly emotion with which they were expressed, leading me to a dark comprehension of her meaning, I shuddered, and held away my head, and unconsciously covered my face with my apron; for I felt as if the presence of Satan danced betwixt her countenance and mine --'Another world!' I at last replied. 'Emily,' said Miss Oliphant, after a long pause, 'Emily, is it nothing, think you, that the betrayer of your happiness laughs, and sleeps soundly, whilst madness encompasses your pillow, and misery dries up your moisture, so that you know nothing but restlessness upon your bed? Think ye that the wretchedness which drives you to this act shall not be visited on his head, sooner than on yours?' All I could answer was, 'Another world! I dare not enter it.' 'Do not think that I have not contemplated all this,' returned my grief-maddened companion, attempting to brave it, although I felt the grasp of her hand, which had still hold of mine, relaxing, and that her whole frame trembled. At last, summoning her speech, the powers of which the fullness of her heart had for some time suppressed,—'Is it nothing,' said she, 'that weakness is trampled on by power, without cognizance being taken of the cruelty?—that scorn slays the sensitive, whilst the unfeeling one rejoices in his sin—yea, with the slighted love-strings of your soul weaves himself a garland, with which not only unshamed he gads, but is accounted the good-hearted and the brave amongst his fellow-men? Nor this

all. But woman! Emily—our own sex—the delicate and the humane! Does not she who calls herself virtuous stretch out her hand to him, and she who is deemed honourable greet him with her smiles? and though proudly trampling on sisterly frailty, she yet screens this lordly worm of iniquity—screens him with conventional customs, and washes away his sin in a laver which Heaven never provided."

"I am not naturally vindictive, sir," the narrator added; "yet did I feel as if burning coals filled my veins whilst thus my companion in grief traced the sorrows I had suffered, yet without him who had inflicted them having suffered either reproach or [illegible] 'Think ye,' continued my companion, 'that he who taketh vengeance on our deeds, will make inquisition for your blood, but at the hands of him whose arrow poisoned that life-blood, and who trampled on all that made life dear? Think ye that the soul of the murderer of another's happiness in [illegible]ld shall not be punished with the conscious-[illegible] of a death that never dies, in the world to come?' My blood cooled as I listened to these remarks. I [illegible]sed, for madness had all but filled the place of reflection. I was not, however, so devoid of thought, or so utterly untaught in the principles of religion, as not to be aware that, whatever punishment the destroyer of my peace might be subject to, I, also, must give an account for the deeds done in my body; and I again answered, 'Another world!' And now, sir, I learned how easy it is to become

sceptical on matters of religion. *'Tis as we would have it, so we fancy it to be.*

"When Miss Oliphant first began to throw out hints about what she designated the uncertainty of eternal punishment, thence proceeding to doubt the certainty of an eternal world, my whole feelings recoiled. I remembered my father's holy converse, and his ardent prayers, which of themselves told me that what I heard was a LIE. I yet listened, and listening, I half believed, *because I loved to have it so.* My friend, soon discerning my partial yielding,—'Do not let us delay—let it be to-night,' she added. I said, 'No; let me have another day to think of it.' And strange to say, I intended to occupy that time in reading the Bible, hoping that by doing so, I should find solace to support, and even *holiness* to prepare me for committing an act at variance with each page of the sacred book.

"Having come to the resolution to take what we termed a determinate step next night, we dropt the subject, but still sat long together, though few and solemn were our words. Next day, however, Miss Oliphant making no further allusion to the awful circumstance, I did not even trouble myself to fulfil my purpose of reading the Bible, hoping nothing more would be said on the subject, a hope at which I felt a secret relief, as I fancied that had she persisted, it had been cowardly in me to swerve from concessions which, in the excitement of the moment, I had made, though which I now repented. But, sir,

there is nothing surer in one's life than disappointment," the narrator here with great simplicity observed. "On retiring to our room at night, Miss Oliphant shewed the same excitement and contrariety in her movements as on the former evening, her feelings having, at the same time, a far more fearful and unearthly appearance; and rising hurriedly and silently, she placed a phial of laudanum on the table. Trembling, I attempted to snatch it up; but she anticipated me. I knew that to disclose her intention to the inmates of the house would make her more resolute in committing the act at the first opportunity. To attempt to reason with her, under such excitement, I knew were vain; and scarcely knowing what I uttered, I said, 'Sure, my dear, you had better throw yourself into the sea at once.' And whether it be that the most resolute suicide seeks a respite, I do not know; but her eye assuming its more natural appearance, 'Say you so, Emily?' she replied; 'and shall we not then, my dear child, both *plunge* together?'"

Miss Dunn becoming more tremulous, "I will not," she said, "entail upon you a recital of what succeeded. Next day, I went to a retired place in the outskirts of the city, to ponder what I had promised to do, carrying also your Testament in my bag; for, strange as it may seem, though afraid to read it, I still carried it about with me. That day, however, having been associating your counsels, and my mother's prayers, with the resolution I had come

to on the preceding night, I resolved to seek a retired spot, on which to sit down and candidly and seriously peruse it for an hour. It was the first time I had been beyond the pavement of the streets for many, many months; and whilst my feet had never trod on the green grass, the pure breath of heaven had hardly ever blown upon my face. The beauties of spring-time and summer, the dawn of the morning, and the cheering beam of noon, alike wanted attraction for me; for where the heart feels no summer, the summer of nature can in nowise clothe the feelings. Beauty lends no charm to misery; and the pure associations of nature illumine not nor gladden the dark recesses of guilt and scorn. On that day, all were happy around me, from the maid who spread her new-washed clothes upon the grass, to him who laughed for very idleness. But though the happiness of others may cheer the *sinlessly* disconsolate, it but adds misery to the soul girt in the sorrow that sin binds.

"All unhappy as I was, I, however, began to read the fourteenth chapter of John's Gospel, it being that which my mother often betook herself to in the days of her mourning. But I had not proceeded far when I was interrupted by a voice exclaiming, 'Emily! my child, Emily!'

"It was Maria—my dear Maria Millicent.—'Emily, Emily, what are you doing here?' she asked. And it was not," continued Miss Dunn, "without feelings of self-satisfaction that I an-

swered, '*I am reading the Bible ;*' pointing also to the Saviour's address to His disciples.

"'Emily, are you reading this as an address to yourself or to some other person?' Maria now asked. To which not knowing what to say, 'It is a beautiful chapter, and I am *just* reading it,' I answered.

"'Emily,' Maria again rejoined, 'Emily, things are only beautiful in themselves.' And pointing to the sea, of which we had an extensive prospect, as it rolled its small white waves on the beach of the Firth, 'The calmness of the ocean,' she continued, 'and the curling of the ocean's waves are beautiful, but not to him who is sinking in its deeps with judgment and an angry God before him.'.

"In going over the few verses which I had read before Maria accosted me, I had felt *comfort*, having persuaded myself that their benign influence, and their holy breathing, must needs be wafted over me by the mere reading of the chapter, without reference to the nature of its application; and happier as I was to see Miss Millicent than I could have been to see any other living being, I was yet disconcerted at her remarks, and almost regretted her visit. For, ah, sir!" the speaker mournfully remarked, "a wounded spirit, though by no means cooling friendship, yet oft-times *winters* the heart where true friendship dwells. Yes, sir," she added, "friendship digs a deep well, but sorrow digs a deeper."

It is but justice to the narrator to say, that all this was delivered with the utmost simplicity; irrelative particulars being also dovetailed in with the greatest ease and conciseness. The frequent occurrence of the pronoun, "I," neither indicated egotism nor induced hesitancy. And though by no means expressed with fluency, the whole was yet told so much more naturally, and in so much shorter time than it could have been by any of the other sex, that I could not help mourning that woman's other capabilities should be so much more wanting than those of volubility. The learned man could not have expressed himself so well, because not with so much ease; and though the etymologist might have used more correct terms, he yet could not have stated them with so much expressiveness.

So it happened, however, that with all Miss Dunn's speed, succinctness, and felicity of speech, she had merely arrived at this stage of her history when the conversation was interrupted by the entrance of two ladies, whose business appearing to be respecting their garments (Miss Dunn being by profession a dress-maker), I immediately retired: albeit the narrator's mention of Miss Millicent had raised my anxiety for its continuance. For I deny it not, that I feel a peculiar interest in the history of one in whom I was the means of awakening feelings, which must either have led the individual to a holier life, or added sin to iniquity, by the light those feelings conveyed—

whose letter told me that, worthless though the instrument, I had rent the adament, and, in some measure at least. directed the beclouded soul to the sunshine of eternal day. Nor can *my* feelings be the less ardent, that *hers* were expressed in such an ambiguous manner—such hope, and yet such hopelessness, attending them. There are indeed, as you remind me, other objects, sufficiently numerous and sufficiently urgent for all the energies of our spiritual solicitude. But what mother invests not her strongest sympathies in that child whose body is subject to deformity, or whose mind to dubiety? Who is he that is not more solicitous about the shrub of his own planting, than about all the trees of the forest? or who is she that rejoiceth not more in the floweret sowed and reared by her own fingers, than in all the other flowers of the garden? "Yea, what woman, who, having an hundred pieces of silver, and if she lose one of them, doth not light a candle and sweep diligently until she find it; and when she hath found it, rejoiceth not more in the piece that was found than in all the other ninety and nine?"

Thus, however, closed my long interview with Miss Dunn; and thus closes my longer letter.

LETTER V.

My dear

And was it not enough that I explained the ardency of my solicitude for the lost one, by a reference to the "lost sheep," or the "piece of silver," that you still ask, "What is thy Maria more than another Maria, amongst all the *waters* of Marah, or in all the wide family of sin and woe?" My last letter was too long, else might I have furthermore illustrated that the greater the soul, the greater do we suppose its capability of misery or enjoyment to be. By such an estimate, I could not help judging of the capacious soul of her to whom you allude. And as the talents, however few, or however many, must be put to usury, so, also, do I believe, shall reward or punishment be meted according to capability, that capability being, in a great measure, regulated according to the stature of the soul. Nor do I consider this incompatible with the righteous and eternal decree that what a man soweth, that shall he also reap, and that by the deeds done in the body he shall be judged.

There is, I am aware, something so awful in the thought of a lost soul, that it is not for humanity to draw any line of distinction betwixt the sufferings of the one and the other. The smoke of the torment of *all*, we know, ascendeth up for ever and ever. Yet in the contemplation of the soul of the great-minded and the noble being eternally excluded from the presence of Omniscience and numbered with the base, is there something by which the mind is more peculiarly arrested, in which we feel the deepest interest, because associating with it the utmost intensity of that suffering which, though awaiting all who *know not God*, however great the mind or (otherwise) noble its attributes, yet the intensity of which, as we conceive, must be felt somewhat in proportion to the native grandeur of the mind, and the loftiness of what were its pursuits below. This, I believe, awakened my keenest sympathies in behalf of Maria; and this, I believe, has nigh formed each link of that chain which has bound the subject so closely to my heart.

I nevertheless blame not your surmise—but, enough!—you shall have my confidence.

From the concluding paragraphs of my last, you will not suppose that I was unmindful of making another visit, whether friendly or professional, to my autobiographic patient. I did not, however, find her so inclinable to personal history as on my former visit.

"I fear, sir, you must have thought me too communicative on your former visit," she replied in re-

ference to some allusions I had just made, in hopes that she would therefrom re-commence her detail. I answered I had felt, and could not but feel, interested in the few incidents she had related to me, and that I should be happy to hear the succeeding part of her history. After some hesitation, she at last resumed it; but with an inconceivable infringement on the due concatenation of events, the narrator, to my surprise as well as disappointment, began by introducing her salutation from Miss Oliphant on the evening of the day on which she had met Miss Millicent, without making further reference to that subject.

"Ah! sir," she began, "whilst one ministering angel had been sent to me that day, another had been sent to Anna Oliphant, who had proceeded to Leith pier to pitch upon a "favourable" locality for making the deadly plunge, which she intended making in the darkness of the evening. But as she paced the pier, a gentleman dropt a tract on her pathway, which she took up, and which was entitled, 'The Self Destroyer;' and though the little book treated only of the person destroying himself by sin, yet on first glancing at the title, it had pierced her heart as an arrow from the bow. It struck her as if sent direct from the hand of Him whose ways she had dared to dispute, and of whom she had said in her heart, 'There is no God.'"

I confess that the chasm made by the narrator, in silently passing over the rest of her interview with

Miss Millicent, well nigh allayed my interest in her history. But no sooner had she mentioned Leith pier and the title of the tract, than I felt new interest awakened; immediately recollecting to have been very much struck with the wild and disconsolate appearance of a lady whom I had met on that pathway, and to have purposely dropt a tract bearing the title referred to, having previously repassed her a second time for the purpose of dropping it in her way. I recollected also that having, on the day in question, left home without the few tracts which it was my practice to carry with me, I hurriedly returned for them, and that on retracing my steps, I had accused myself for having been at the trouble of doing so, on the ground of the small likelihood of the little messengers being made useful to any one. And, combining this with my opportune meeting with Miss Oliphant, the words of the wise man came forcibly into my mind. "In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thy hand, for thou knowest not whether shall prosper either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good."

Miss Dunn proceeding with her narrative, "Emily," she said was Miss Oliphant's first salutation on her return in the evening, "O! Emily, there is a GOD, His providence guides our steps, His eye saw us, His ear heard our sinful words, and yet— and yet He cut us not down in the heat of his ire.'

"'My dear Anna.' I replied, 'you knew all this before; 'twas because you did not like to retain God

in your heart, that you ever entertained other thoughts.'

"'No, Emily,' she said, 'I would not believe unless I saw signs and wonders, and these I have seen to-day.'

"'Anna!' I said, 'these we see every day, whether beneath or above us, in or around us. But pray what have you seen?' I at last enquired; for though, at first, conceiving the words of my companion to proceed from a mere impulse, I soon perceived that she was in earnest.

"'Emily,' she replied, 'when I paced the side of the mighty deep; God saw me; and when I meditated throwing myself into it, he sent a message to me; and there,' said she, 'is the message,' putting the tract into my hands.

"'Because I said unto thee I saw thee under the fig-tree, believest thou? Thou shalt see greater things than these,' I replied.

"Miss Oliphant's eye at this becoming more fixed and calm, 'Emily,' she answered with awe-struck accents, 'Emily, I have an indistinct idea of these being scripture-words, but uttered by whom, or under what circumstances, I do not recollect. Pray tell me. I feel that they apply to me in a peculiar way; for whilst I have this day not only believed, but *realized*, the feeling that God, in very deed, *saw me*, I have also the consciousness that I have yet greater things to see. Yes, Emily, I feel an expansion of soul which I never felt before, but which na-

ture, or some stranger feeling, not only still tells me must be filled, but that the supplies must come from the stores of infinitude.' "

Miss Dunn here made a digression, to inform me how or why she had so readily answered her companion with the beautiful words of our Saviour to Nathaniel.

"I told you before, sir, that whilst reading my New Testament, I had been accosted by Miss Millicent; but I told you not, that before going there, or engaging in that duty, I had been long employed in looking at the sea from Arthur's Seat; and with its calm surface and small white waves, I had hugged myself in the idea that it were a less formidable thing to plunge into its depths, than I had before imagined; a deed which, as I told you, Miss Oliphant and I had resolved upon, taking each other by the hand as we took the fatal leap. And, O sir! when Miss Millicent, unconscious of the thoughts which just before had filled my mind, alluded to the calmness of the ocean affording no beauty to him who was sinking in its depths, with eternity and an offended God before him, I could not help exclaiming, 'Now, verily, God is king, and saw me when I saw not myself; for, O! Maria,' said I, 'you would not, and could not have delivéred that message unto me, unless God had seen *me* and sent *you*.'

"Maria taking me by the hand, and answering me with the words of the eternal Saviour to him whom he saw beneath the fig-tree, 'Because I said unto

thee, I saw thee under the fig-tree, believest thou?' 'Emily,' she added, 'these are but the beginning of miracles which fall upon the soul of the new-born one, as he 'passes from death unto life.' Come with me, and I will tell you of them.'"

"Miss Millicent had herself become acquainted with these things, then?" I remarked.

"Her appearance, sir," replied Miss Dunn, "was in every respect changed from what it was on the morning on which I had last seen her, and on which I delivered her letter to you. She, indeed, retained her former noble and graceful mein, and she was elegantly dressed as when I formerly knew her; but still there was a change. Besides greater simplicity in her attire, her hue was healthful, and there was a pleasantness and placidness which until now I had not seen. Happiness seemed also to smile over all, so that I thought, surely Maria's bosom must be the abode of joys which have long forsaken mine; and yet I never imagined that these changes flowed from a change of heart and life. She again invited me calmly, but earnestly, to return with her, assuring me that she did so with the most friendly intention; informing me, moreover, that she had tidiugs to tell me, of which, she said, she was sure I had never yet heard.

"I had received so many indubitable proofs of Miss Millicent's sincerity and friendship," Miss Dunn continued, "that I could not for a moment question her pretensions; but her happiness only

increased my misery, and having, besides, resolved on reading the Bible, I resolutely refused. She took me again by the hand, and said, 'Emily, my heart cleaves to you. I will not, cannot leave you. Come with me, for I have a thousand delightful things to tell you. Come, my dear, and what my heart and my purse can do for your happiness shall be done.' I consented, and in a short time found myself in a genteel and respectable habitation. I then asked the cause of the extraordinary change which had taken place, both in her mind and in her outward appearance.

"With all Miss Millicent's amiable temper, it was, sir, not without an element of irritability, proceeding," added her fair fair apologist,—"proceeding, as I thought, from high principles and keen sensibility, with the absence of moral training in younger years; and I had no sooner asked the cause of Maria's *change*, than, perceiving the blood mount to her face, I feared I had offended her. But fixing her eye stedfastly upon me, 'There *is* a change, Emily,' she replied; 'but 'tis one which I am not aware is obvious to your eye.' Then, pressing my hand, 'My dear Emily Dunn,' she said, 'I have loved you, and you know it. I loved you more than ever one child of sin and sorrow loved another. My griefs I ever concealed from you, that I might not grieve a heart that I loved, and that, I knew, could but ill sustain its own affliction. Every thing I reckoned joy, I was wont to reveal to you. Will

you grant me one favour in return; as I never asked you to hear the tale of my woe, or to bear one of my sorrows, will you now listen to the tale of my happiness, and participate in the springs of my joy?'

"I was, sir," said Miss Dunn, "as you know, in great trouble of mind; and I remember how I felt when Maria uttered these words. She had no sooner spoken of her happiness, than I felt as if the strongest ties that bound us together were broken. I even ceased that moment to love her, and thought, if she was happy, she could no longer bear love or friendship to me. I sprang from my chair, and replied, as I moved towards the door, 'Yes, Miss Millicent, we once loved each other; but if you are happy, we can do so no longer. Do not mock a broken spirit. Pour not incense on the ashes of the urn.'

"But, O sir! may I never forget how my long-suffering Maria reasoned with me. 'Emily,' she said, 'did I ever open my lips wantonly or wilfully to wound a heart that sorrow had wounded? If I tell you of my joys, it is only that they may become yours. If I have opened the door of the banqueting chamber, it is that you may walk in. If I invite you to do so, it is because the Master of the feast stands with entreating voice, saying, 'Come in, that my house may be filled.' Are you sad, Emily,' she continued, 'because, as I long lived, you are living in that hardness of heart which shuts out the soul from God and from happiness?'

" 'I have certainly great cause to be sorrowful on these accounts,' I replied.

" 'True, my dear Emily; but I also feel grief on these accounts, and to death shall feel it; so that if mutual sorrow be the bond of our friendship, it shall never be dissolved. I hope, however, we shall yet be bound by a closer and more joyful covenant; for, O Emily! there is a Saviour for the most guilty, and He is able, and He is willing, to make us both happy.'

"Miss Millicent waited for an answer; but I returned none. 'My dearest child,' she then asked, 'do you ever see a Bible now?'

"Taking your Testament, sir, from my bag, I said, 'Did not I tell you, Maria, that I intended reading an hour on this, and pondering what I read, ere I returned to my lodging?'

"She flew to me, and embraced me in her arms; but my heart sunk in the gall of bitterness, to think she should embrace such a wicked one in the false persuasion that I was changed like herself; and I said, 'O Miss Millicent! let me not deceive you. That book is not a book of comfort to me. It has been a torment to my soul ever since the morning I last saw you.' I then," continued Miss Dunn—"I then told her that I had received it from the gentleman who called for her that morning, and also what you said to me; when Maria wept; but, sir, they were tears of love. Though, when I asked why she left that morning, without waiting for the

visit of one, her interview with whom had taken such hold of her mind, the channel of her weeping was changed, for I perceived that her tears became those of shame and vexation."

"Indeed!" I chanced to reply, partly to fill up the speaker's pause, and partly because I knew not what else to say.

"Yes, sir," Miss Dunn rejoined; and once more betraying the tendency of her sex to deviate from the consectaneous line of discourse—"Yes, sir; but here is one coming who knows more of Miss Millicent's feelings on that subject than I do." My persevering informant, at the same time, lowering her voice, and hurrying her words into a parenthetical mode, also adding, "Being both poetesses, they were the liker one another; but I, sir, am no poetess." The latter part of the affirmation being, at the same time, expressed in accents which seemed to say, "Thank heaven, I am not."

Before I had time to make any reply, however, the door was opened, and a lady entered—one of graceful mein, and of lady-like manners; though, from her familiar deportment to Miss Dunn, I soon perceived that she was an inmate of the house. Her bow to me was too familiar to be polite, had it not been that it was too dignified to be vulgar, and too gentle to be intrusive.

Miss Dunn named her companion; but it being to me a thing of indifference, the name escaped my

ear. And yet, when I surveyed the countenance, and marked the general bearing of the new-arrived, I soon perceived her to be far from being an indifferent individual. She was not beautiful; but she was interesting—so much openness of heart, and yet so much sensibility—so much of a romantic disposition, and yet so much of the strength of Christian principle—such strong passions, and yet such a liberal share of common sense and deliberation—such promptitude, and yet such softness, as are seldom combined in the same individual, and seldom found in the poet or the poetess. There was humility, dignified, though rendered deeper, by a consciousness of alliance with heaven; and there was pride—pride arising from the presence, not the consciousness, of true greatness, subjugated and laid low by the influence of the cross. Withal, great sprightliness of natural disposition was fired with a live coal from the altar of heaven; and native benevolence, baptized with the powers of the world to come, was turned to holy ardency to save the souls of men. These are characteristics which it was impossible to be long in the individual's company without discovering; for in her open countenance the natural disposition was reflected in every feature, and in the ardency of holy feelings the true Christian beamed in every action.

But I now feel admonished by your hints that I make my letters too long, and that I ought to make

them shorter and more frequent. Will ye, therefore, that I reserve succeeding incidents for a subsequent letter; or must I *take* the hint, and reserve them altogether? Waiting your reply, I am meanwhile your devoted friend and correspondent.

LETTER VI.

MY DEAR ——,

WHAT a daring, refractory being is man! Whether is it that his perversity is deeper than humanity can fathom, or that his perceptions are more obtuse than those of the lower creation? God said unto him, "Eat, and thou shalt die;" he stretched forth his hand and ate. "Believe, and thou shalt live," said his Maker; but man would not. "Ho! every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters; and he that hath no money, come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price," still cried entreating mercy; but man still refused. "Behold Him stretched upon the cross; look and be saved," was yet the voice of bleeding love; but, whilst one "passed by," another scornfully replied, "Behold the man!" Strong in death, "IT IS FINISHED!" Omnipotence at last exclaimed. But, lo! the worm of the dust rejoins, "*I will finish it myself.* I have, or I want to have, something of my own with which to *accept* this FINISHED WORK," he

at least responds. "*I* have found out a ransom," still urges the everlasting One. "I want that ransom, but I want my own righteousness with which to purchase it," is the response ; as if *he* would make overture to his Maker, or as if the clay would mutually concede the point with Omnipotence. I have expressed myself in the past, although I ought to have done so in the present tense ; the *present* work of his Maker's hands, being still the subject of this rebellion against His law and against His love ; the voice of eternal mercy being still lifted up as when it first descended from the cross, or was first heard in the counsels of love which were before the hills began ; and man, puny man, in the work of his salvation, still daring the sovereign decree as when he put forth his hand to the forbidden tree.

I make these short and desultory remarks in connexion with the character of Emily Dunn, in whose history I now feel more interested than at first, and who I cannot but regard as a person of more abundant attainments than I had hitherto conceived her to be. The most attractive features of her character are not, indeed, gilt with those graces which burst upon one at first sight. They dissolve upon the heart rather than dazzle the eye. They are felt by intimacy rather than perceived by acquaintance. But the finest and longest-standing flowers open not their petals the most quickly : even so I believe it is with Emily Dunn. Nor is any one of these slow-dissolving or slow-unfolding graces, when left by

itself, obviously striking, even when taken at its softest or its brightest. They must be bundled together. What then? 'tis combination and consistency — unanimity of the virtues, which give the charm to woman's character, or indeed to social life in either sex. The *one* mighty deed, or the one brilliant saying of the hero on the field of battle, or on some place of better-gotten renown, is, in truth, of all his character, alone immortalized. But it is the soft glance and the sympathetic sigh, the patience and the self-denial, the friendly confidence and the obliging disposition, the consulting the happiness, anticipating the anxiety, and preventing the disquiet of others, which constitute the charm of social life— that best boon of earthly bliss. These are the virtues which illustrate, which, indeed, *make the man;* and which, alike thriving and shining in the shade, are most of all becoming in woman — in woman, whose sphere is retirement, whose *nature* domestic enjoyment. They are those by which Emily Dunn is specially characterized; and I marvel that I did not perceive such an unanimity of graces sooner; not the least adornment of which is, that they are unadorned — unadorned by aught but nature's own gilding.

The remarks at the commencement were made, however, in reference to the religious, and not to the social character of Emily Dunn; who, notwithstanding her desire, which I believe to be sincere, to be a Christian, yet refuses to become one; and

who, notwithstanding her "good sense," even in matters of religion, is yet untaught. Her short-comings, in both instances, being simply, *Because* she will not believe the Gospel: she will not believe on the Saviour of men for the surety of her sins; which she refuses to do from the conviction and the feeling that she is "dead in tresspasses and sins." To the free offer, "Believe and ye shall live," she says in action, though not in words, "I want to live first." To the invitation, "Come without money and without price," she replies, "I *will*, when I get holiness and repentance to come with." And to the grand announcement, "IT IS FINISHED"—the announcement "sealed with oaths and promises and blood," and uttered with all the majesty of death, she still wants to add something of her own supplying, "If I but felt anything like holy principles within me, I should soon believe," said she.

I told her now, as I told her before, that as without faith, it is impossible to please God, so without it there can be no holiness.

"But, sir, I must have something besides my own mere belief in a statement to corroborate my evidence of eternal life."

"Yea, verily," I said; "the Christian has, and must have, a strong witness within him that he has passed from death unto life; a witness which testifies that old things are passed away, and all things have become new. And if there have been some under-working movement, some wheel within a

wheel, that he cannot tell the process by which the *old* passed away and the *new* came, he can yet testify that, 'Whereas he was blind, he now sees.'"

"That is just what I want, sir; but I feel that I have not yet experienced any of that new light, or of those new principles," Miss Dunn replied, with great earnestness.

I simply reminded her that she had not yet "believed," and that in no case the evidence goes before the act.

"I do believe in part, sir," she rejoined; "though, perhaps, not to the extent to which *you* believe."

I urged upon her the fact that it is a contradiction in terms to say that she or any individual believed in part; that, in civil life, such an affirmation would be rejected. "And how much more," said I, "when the *thing to be believed* has been made sure by the blood and by the death, by the resurrection and the ascension of Him on whom you are to believe; and has not only been made plain to us by His prophets and apostles, but for the further—for the divine illumination on which, an interpreter—one amongst a thousand—had also been promised; that His work and his power has been made manifest by His *in*-wrought operations in the hearts of thousands who are now in heaven, and of thousands who still on earth experience that joy and peace which the world can neither give nor take away."

"That is it, sir; I lack the evidence and the assistance of that spirit," being again the reply. I once

more reminded Miss Dunn that she was seeking the proof without the deed; that however mysterious and divine the operations of the Spirit, they are regulated by the truth; that His first impulse is *urging obedience*, and that in yielding which, *believing* is the primary step I said also that constraining man was no part of the Spirit's office; and that to suppose that religion was only wrought in the heart by some constraining influence, were to suppose man less like Deity than his Maker had made him.

But how various are the pathways of unbelief, and how often does it retrace the steps it has already trodden! After listening most attentively to these remarks, my auditor again reverted to her hardness of heart, and, most of all, to her former sinful ways, the remembrance of which rolled ever like a thick cloud upon her soul: and ever she urged these as an obstacle to her believing on Him who came to save the chief of sinners. And in vain was she asked if she thought faithlessness could be in Him who had given His well-beloved Son to die; sent His prophets and ministers to this world for thousands of years; written out such abundant offers of mercy as His Gospel contains, and sealed them with His oath, saying, "As I live, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that he turn unto me and live;" endearing them also with his gracious invitation, "Come unto me and I will give you life; come and ye shall find rest to your soul."

"If you knew my past life, all my sins, and all my hardness of heart, sir, you would, with myself, think it great presumption for me to adopt the language of a child of God, or to believe that these promises are mine."

I told her that, not to believe the unrestricted and unconditional testimony of Him who cannot lie, or to wish to prop the work which His eternal and well-beloved Son has "finished," was greater presumption, and a greater offence than that involved in all her past sin; that betwixt not accepting His offer—not taking hold of his promise, and *not believing*, there was no difference, nor any difference betwixt this negation and *making the God of Truth a liar*. His promise, I assured her, was spoken in truth and faithfulness, whether she believed it or not, and that a free, unfettered pardon was provided, whether she accepted it or not

The disconsolate girl still mournfully responded that I did not know all the sins of her heart.

I answered, no; nor did she know the thousandth part of these herself; that their extent was only known by Him who bore their burden on the tree; that He had felt them all; and that, whilst He had there made expiation for them all, He had suffered for them all, whether she availed herself of His glorious work, or still turned away from the bleeding love that wrought it, and now offered it.

This conversation having taken place in that interview whereof the former part was given in my

last, ought also to have been added to that letter. But besides the wish to comply with your request respecting brevity, I had, withal, a surmise that, by subjoining it to my other varied detail, you had passed it over with impatience, if not with more speed than had led you to note its particulars. And however simple and inapt the observations I have now recorded, they yet refer to the most important of all subjects—*the conversion of a sinner.* I may, I trust, therefore, be excused for having wished to give them more prominence than the mere codicil of a letter had afforded.

The lady I referred to in my former epistle was present during our conversation. *Such* a third party was, however, no hindrance or intrusion, even in discourse of such a confidential nature. She seldom lent her own word, and *never* interrupted *ours.* Yet was it evident that whilst she seemed already well acquainted with Miss Dunn's sentiments, she had, at the same time, realized those expressed by the writer, yea, and I fear in a higher degree than he, alas! realizes them,—her experience and conceptions of spiritual things seeming to have risen to the utmost sublimity to which the soul, whilst clothed with flesh and blood, is capable of rising. I wished she would take her departure, that I might enquire of Miss Dunn who she was, or whence such a person had such heavenly learning. I was the more anxious to be informed of of these particulars from the hasty remarks which Miss Dunn had made in reference to

her friend's poetic talent. The allusion, having been coupled with Miss Millicent's kindred genius, had also interested me the more keenly. The stranger, however, evinced no disposition to retire ; and, recollecting that ladies seldom meet without having numberless subjects belonging to themselves to dilate upon. I made my own exit, and with that exit I close my present communication.

LETTER VII.

My dear ——,

"Cast thy bread upon the waters, and thou shalt find it many days hence," or if thou findest it not, who knows but it may, nevertheless, have brought forth in some twenty, in some sixty, and in some an hundred fold; may have given food to some hungry, or light to some beclouded soul, which, perchance, may have communicated these to another, and that to a third, and thus the capital hath been laid at interest in Heaven's bank? But and if thou dost not cast it forth, perchance an account of debtor and creditor shall be kept in Heaven's register—yea, and appear against thee at a time when thou art in nowise prepared to meet it. Withal one whom thou deemedst not may come in before thee. Yes! amongst "the hidden ones," the unlettered and the lowly, who scarcely knew the meaning of principal and interest, and who were never possessed of either as belonging to this world's funds, they, perchance, shall be surprised to find, at the final day of reckoning, that

they have investments in that undecaying currency, that their "two mites," though unnoted amongst men—their humble under-current influence or benevolence, though, perhaps, lightly thought of by the more affluent, and even by the more "eminent" Christian, were yet faithfully entered in Heaven's enduring archives. Surprised, indeed, they perchance shall be to find entries to their credit in Heaven's ledger, entries which on earth they not only dreamt not of, but whereof the meaning they hardly had learning to understand, or wisdom to comprehend.

But, O! if the account of debtor and creditor shall have been strictly kept, if an entry shall have been made for all the bread which should have been, but which was not, cast upon the waters by the more influential, the more affluent, or the men of more wisdom, whether by the apathy, the avarice, or the faithlessness of the endowed, and if these shall have been computed according to the ratio of influence, of wealth, of intellect, or of any, or all, the "little" means of doing good—if these, or their thousandth part, be noted, what then shall the end be? And of how few shall it be said, "Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord," "for I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat, thirsty, and ye gave me drink, naked, and ye clothed me, sick, and ye visited me, in prison, and ye came unto me, a stranger, and ye took me in?"

I have made the latter remarks in reference to myself, not, however, that my influence, my afflu-

ence, or my wisdom, are, in any measure, abundant ; but because I have not sufficiently improved them ; whilst as strict an account, we know, shall be made for the "one talent" as for the "ten." I have also been the more forcibly reminded of the many means I have let slip, whether in giving bread to the hungry, and water to the thirsty, in entertaining the stranger, or in speaking a word in season to him that is weary; or in "casting bread upon the water," by whatever means a way was opened; in all these I have been reminded of my short-comings by a circumstance from which I have just learned that whilst the act may have been blessed without our knowledge, there also may have been exigencies which we knew not of, and hence that it is ours not only to do good, as we have opportunity, but to *search out the cause* withal.

The incident I have to relate is indeed one with which you are already in part acquainted. I told you of having, in Miss Dunn's narrative, recognized Miss Oliphant, as the lady for whom I had dropt the tract on Leith pier. I also told you of having met one whose appearance and piety alike interested me on my last visit to Miss Dunn. This also, it seems was Miss Oliphant. I beg to add, that it was the same person I had seen wrapt in the blanket at Mrs. Black's. Miss Dunn having left the lodging on the previous day, with having first made an engagement to meet Miss Oliphant in the evening, and having been prevented from keeping her appoint-

ment, the other, with despair, if not insanity, taking the place of the better feelings formerly alluded to, had wilfully swallowed the laudanum, which the landlady had been so anxious to persuade me had been taken by mistake.

These particulars, with an account of the deep mental agony to which Miss Oliphant was subject on recovering from the narcotic effects of the drug, I learned from Miss Dunn at a subsequent interview; and also that Miss Millicent, on the evening in question, had not only been urging Miss Dunn herself to leave Mrs. Black's, but had, at the same time, made such arrangements as should enable the two to provide a livelihood for themselves in doing so.

"Miss Millicent was then herself in independent or in easy circumstances?" I said.

"Maria is by nature friendly and benevolent, sir. As the Christian, she is humble, and also communicative on Christian topics; but as the lady, or as the woman, she is reserved, and, I fear, also proud; so that neither Miss Oliphant nor I know much of Maria's present circumstances; and of her past history we are altogether unacquainted," returned the narrator. Enough, however; I have now, myself seen Miss Millicent; but of this anon. I write in order.

"Miss Oliphant and you are the more confidential friends, then?" I said.

"We live together, sir, which we do in the greatest friendship and harmony. Our present feelings, and

our future prospects are, at the same time, known to each other; but of Miss Oliphant's past circumstances, or course of life, I am also unacquainted."

Miss Dunn had scarcely concluded these and the foregoing particulars, when Miss Oliphant entered the room. And having been previously informed by Miss Dunn who the person was who had dropt the tract for her on Leith pier, she, somewhat to my surprise, entered into a minute, and, as I conceived, curious enough detail of her feelings towards me on lifting and perusing it. I may, however, premise, that being herself without suspicion, and also bearing witness to a great absence of reserve, what in another were officious talk, is with her neither forwardness nor egotism. Brought up in an irreligious family, and having scarcely ever witnessed the form of religion in any of her acquaintances, her present Christian views are, on this account, perhaps, the more primitive. She looks upon those who have separated themselves from the world as a more distinct and a more closely united family, than they who have been reared under the observance of religious ordinances are too apt to look upon them. The relationship of "brethren in Christ Jesus" is with Miss Oliphant no bond, binding or loosening, conspicuous or sunk in the shade, as the sympathies, the circumstances, or the dispositions, of Christians too often admit it to be; and whilst unbosoming herself with the utmost confidence to her fellow-Christians, warning, reproving, or exhorting, as need

may be, she always expects "change" in return, yea, and *accepts* it. The latter remark I the rather add, seeing some there be who, though liberal in giving admonition, have yet no predilection for receiving it. Thus, though not without delicacy, yet without the least reserve, she told me what were her own feelings, as well as the opinion she had entertained of him who now writes.

"I saw that you dropt the tract for me, and I fancied, sir, that your demeanour evinced not a little of the spirit of self-righteousness. 'And *would*,' thought I, 'that those individuals who seem so anxious about the life to come, knew something of the sorrows of the life that now is. Had there been a shilling in it, it might, perchance, have given me a respite from the pressure of this life, until I had, at least, read it.' And much as I was struck with its applicability to my circumstances, yet this reflection still revolving in my mind, 'I need not look at it,' I again mournfully mused; 'it affords me no information and no comfort about a provision for this world; and there can be less sin in the deed I contemplate, than in leading a life of sin, betwixt which and destitution I have no remedy.' I also comforted myself with the thought that I could not be much worse than many who, offering comfort in things of another world, do but mock the weight of woe to whom they are offered, by forgetting to remove the pressure which lays him prostrate on the world beneath, and by reason of the weight of which, his

faint and feeble aspirations after Heaven fall heavily back upon the breast that breathed them. These, sir, were my reflections on reading your tract, notwithstanding that I, at the same time, looked upon it as a messenger sent to me from Heaven; and though my heart has, I trust, since then been changed; yet are these, or similar feelings, still unchanged. There is, sir," she continued, "a *teaching* in this world's miseries and this world's wants; and he who has not experienced them is yet untaught, whatever his Christian eminence, or his mental attainment. And whenever I hear a rich man, whether in the pulpit or in private life, preaching up the doctrine, 'Be content with such things as ye have;' or when I hear the untried denouncing the tempted, or dilating on the comforts of the poor, or the blessedness of the afflicted—when I hear these, or the numberless host who say, 'Be ye warmed, and be ye clothed,' who say of poverty, 'It is pleasant,' and of privation, 'It is for your good;' when these I hear, I shut my ears, for I remember how often I have seen misery mocked, and piety stripped of its brightest gems, by presenting the heavenly food without taking the yoke off the jaws; or by the *inexperienced* teaching what was too profound for theoretical knowledge to find out."

I was just as unreserved as Miss Oliphant, and I replied, that, whilst I admired the tendency of her sentiments generally, I thought them bundled together without much nicety of reflection, and that they

were withal subject to some exceptions; remarking, that to give a well-dressed lady a tract with a shilling in it, would be scorned by the recipient, and, in all likelihood, might be better applied by the giver; "Whilst, many there be," said I, "who are wishful to manifest God's goodness to their own soul by shewing it to others, who are yet unable to minister of the things of this world."

"True, sir," she replied; "but whilst this delegate of spiritual comfort, with calmness on his side, and with the brightness of immortality in his eye, is able to take these things into account, and to see them with more unbiased vision, yet must we expect but few concessions from him who is not only dead in trespasses and sins, but whose heart-strings are wrung by the fell grasp of poverty, and whose senses are all but maddened with its pain; and therefore must we be the more wary of, even in appearance, cheapening the blessings of eternal life, by making a more liberal offer of Heaven's gold than of this world's dross; that is, where he who offers the former is possessed of the other, and where the heart of him to whom the offer is made is so enmeshed in the warpings of penury, that little room is left for the heavenly in-pourings."

"You disagree with the principle of doing what we can in reference to the things of the next world unless we can, at the same time, assist in relieving from the ills of this, then?" I said.

"No. in no wise, sir," my fair antagonist promptly, but meekly returned. "I think few do what they ought to do in reference to promoting their neighbour's interest in the things of another world. And yet fewer, perhaps, look upon the importance of granting worldly relief in the same way as He who made man in His own image looks upon it, or as the Saviour of men, whether by precept or example, enjoined it. There is, sir, a magnanimity in some people's faith, and a transcendentalism in their piety, which are apt to reckon the things of time in a more secondary light than even the great Jehovah Himself reckons them."

I said, if Miss Oliphant would allow me to be so plain, I should say that I considered her argument now at variance with her premises.

"Oh! yes," she replied, "but I forgot to add that this high-wrought faith and piety, as exhibited in reference to the things of time, are *only* in regard to *others*, not to the individuals themselves; which brings back my argument to its starting point."

This was, however, only a slight feminine digression from Miss Oliphant's subject; and with feelings of gratitude and earnestness, she told me of the light which beamed upon her soul, and of the awakening which entered her spirit, when, retiring to a lonely lane in the outskirts of the town, she read the message to the self-destroyer. She also assured me, in language the most serious and energetic, that homelessness and want, which the hand of man can

so easily provide against, are not to be understood or meted by him who has not felt them, whose pulse has not beaten with their desolateness, and who, morning by morning, has not awoke to the ceaseless burden, which, whether asleep or awake, still presses on the rent bosom which is the subject of them.

At this stage had our conversation arrived, when a stranger was introduced. It was Miss Millicent! I remembered every feature, and it was with difficulty I concealed what I felt at a sight so overjoying. There is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, and it was not unmeet that I should rejoice. The joy of angels moved my bosom; and only difference in capacity, and the discrepancy which must ever be betwixt perfection and imperfection, made it different in degree. It might be enthusiasm, yea, it might be presumption; but I felt, for the moment, as if communing with angels.

How much the same, and yet how changed was Maria! The bold promptitude of character which she displayed on the evening on which I first saw her, still remained; but it was tempered with a prudence and a tenderness of manner, which seemed new elements in her character. Her looks were gentle and retiring, and meekness and refinement embued her speech. The countenance that formerly seemed disinherited of some of those more amiable and effeminate traces, which so well become Woman, now expressed every amiable sensibility, softened with Christian meekness. "Surely," thought I, "if reli-

gion does not re-organize the nature. it at least elevates it far above that altitude to which any other system could raise it. If it does not make a new creation, it at least creates a new structure on the old—yea, more, melting the whole temperament in that divine crucible of love and obedience—submitting it to that heaven-derived alchemy, it brings forth "the fruit of the spirit, which is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance; against which there is no law." And by the indwelling of which, what before was amiable, is rendered more excellent; what was noble, elevated; what was great, is endowed with more grandeur; because enriched with more god-like attributes.

But I have already exceeded the bounds of a letter. Wrapt up, as I was, in my cloak and travelling cap, on the evening on which I first introduced myself to Miss Millicent, she did not now recognize me. Our introduction must, however, be reserved for a succeeding epistle.

LETTER VIII.

MY DEAR ,

IN answer to the concluding hints of your last letter, I blame not your surmises, but beg to assure you of their groundlessness. I, at the same time, marvel at your credulity in supposing it possible that the gourd that sprang up in a day, however interesting, or however much esteemed, could yet be compared to the shelter of our childhood, with all its inwrought and ingrown associations. No! Maria Millicent is fair, but not so fair as her who participated in my infant and my boyish pastime; whose image, as it grew from girlhood to the elegance of its present stature, is still before me; and whose every feature I have loved from my youth up. Once for all, then, Jane Watson, the woman of my first and fondest love, ever has, and, I believe, ever shall sit upon the throne of my earthly affections. With truth in her every lineament, in her every word, and in her every movement, I never shall, I never *would* be less than true to her.

I cannot, however, but trace a great similarity betwixt the two. And, as you have drawn me to it, you will perhaps permit me to do so.

Miss Watson and Miss Millicent are, I should think, of the same stature; their commanding aspect, their complexion, their make and gait the same; except that with Maria the head stands more erect, the step is firmer, and the voice clearer. In unison with these, there is with her the consciousness of greatness—with Jane *only* the presence of it. The brow of the one and the other is alike lofty; but with Jane it is high principles, exalted in themselves, and elevated by veneration; with Maria it is the loftiness of inborn greatness, and masculine ideas. The eyes of the two are equally bright and intelligent; but whilst Maria's are radiant with light, Jane's are shaded with humility, and soft with effeminacy—the one flashes fire, the other drops love. Doubtless, Maria has more fortitude than falls to the lot of Jane—my own Jane Watson; yet, of all the virtues, this is it at which the lover is least discontented at dispensing with; nevertheless, am I not the less persuaded that it is one, by no means the least needful in the wife. Other semblances, I might trace. But enough.

I told, or intended telling you, in my last, that on our meeting at Miss Dunn's, we were not introduced to each other. Miss Millicent, I believe I told you, not having recognized me; and Miss Dunn, from feelings of delicacy, sparing any further introduction than Names, which left the other in ignorance of who

I was; for although I had given her my address on the evening on which we first met, the name seemed to have been quite forgotten We, however, talked for some time on general subjects, during which I must accuse myself of having been engaged in taking note of the lady's feelings and features. And taking my leave without making any reference to our former interview, you will, perhaps, blame me, as I indeed blamed myself, for not following the impulse of my feelings, and at once making myself known to one in whom I felt so much interested. I, however, excused the omission, on the plea that recognition belonging to the female prerogative, it was no part of my business to infringe upon conventional customs; albeit, was it the presence of a third party, or some unaccountable or perverse feeling, to which from my youth up I have been subject, which, in reality, prevented me from doing so; and I had no sooner left the room, than I regretted my reserve. Miss Oliphant coming outside the door with me, however, I asked her to mention the circumstance to Miss Millicent, and to say that, if not disagreeable to the lady, I should be happy to see her again, and at an early opportunity.

Thus, Miss Dunn being still on my list of patients, I called on her, next day. And without subjecting me to introduce the subject myself, "Maria was little aware of who she was speaking to, yesterday, sir," she said; "although, I presume, you had easily recognized her." I said I did not suppose that Miss

Millicent could have recollected me, but that I hoped our meeting had not been unpleasant to her.

"She was, in the first instance, sir, very much vexed, if not offended, that we had not prevented her being brought into the room while you were here; but Miss Oliphant saying, 'Is this your gratitude, Maria? Is this the humility of the followers of the cross? or is it the love of those the signal armorial of whom, is love to one another?' Miss Oliphant making these and similar observations, Maria's ire soon subsided, though perhaps not the natural pride of her disposition.

"'You are right, Miss Oliphant,' she replied; 'yet I hope never to meet the gentleman again;' and Miss Oliphant remarking on the inconsistency of entertaining or allowing such a feeling toward one with whom she expected to spend an eternity of love; 'Ha, Anna!' she answered, 'but what a change—what a transformation must this sowing in dishonour, and being raised in honour—this sowing in corruption, and being raised in incorruption effect? We shrink,' she said, 'at the thought of death and the grave, and we wish that Heaven had appointed a brighter road to its portals; and yet, even with the blood of atonement on our consciences, and with even the witness and the illumination of the Spirit in our inward parts, how else should we be raised a spiritual body, freed from the dross and the imperfection which cleave even to the saint? How else should *Christian* anomalism be turned to unanimity, or how should memory be made to forget the things that give it pain?'

"'That is very true, Maria,' Miss Oliphant replied; 'yet must we leave nothing for this transmutation which on earth can be accomplished, or which Heaven hath commanded us *now* to do? It is whilst in the world that we must overcome it; and in overcoming the world, you will overcome those feelings which at any time render it unpleasant for one Christian to meet or to commune with another.'"

I said I was not aware that any feelings particularly painful to overcome existed betwixt Miss Millicent and me.

"I dare say you don't, sir," returned Miss Dunn; "but reserve is its own punishment, and mystery has its own painful associations. Miss Millicent, in the secretiveness in which she shrouds not only her past history, but her present circumstances, bears a heavier self-infliction than openness on the most unpleasant subject could expose her to."

Piqued as I, perhaps, for a moment, felt, at what I conceived to be the freedom of Miss Dunn's remarks, I replied that a clear conscience is better than openness; that an upright life could withstand the insinuations to which reserve may, at any time, subject it; and that Miss Millicent, having, as I believed, these on her side, I could not see how even secretiveness should make an interview with me or with any other person, either painful or unpleasant.

All this discourse might, however, have been prevented, had Miss Dunn at first informed me, of what she now did, that Miss Millicent had left her

card for me, with an intimation that, as I had desired it, she would be happy to see me.

I confess I felt impatient that this had not been announced at an earlier stage of our conversation.—I felt impatient—yet why should I? Had the artless, the soft-tempered, though anxious-minded informant ever felt impatient with me, notwithstanding my imperfections, my slowness of speech as an instructor on a more important subject, notwithstanding that that subject is felt to be of ten thousand times more importance by her, and that she, I doubt not, feels more keenly upon it, than I trust it is possible for me to feel on any earthly one?

Yes, my dear ——, my impatience was speedily reproved, the comparative nothingness of all other subjects was, I trust, also brought before me, when shortly I became absorbed in a conversation of a different kind, and with one who, though "not far from the kingdom of God," was yet in as great danger of being thrust out as the more *manifest* "publican and sinner;" who, though apparently ready to make any sacrifice to obtain it, to investigate any theory, however intricate or complex, to be enlightened on the things that belong to it—yet declines, or comprehends not, "God's easy, artless, unencumbered plan"—*believe* and *live*.

O! it is indeed a simple, yet sublime—a gracious, yet majestic plan—this plan of salvation—"God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten

Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but should have eternal life." And yet how difficult it is to make the "natural man" to perceive it; how few are ready to resign their own righteousness" for that which is by faith; how few are possessed of the self-denial to give their hearts to him who offers a kingdom in return; but without giving which, *faith cannot be,* nor the heavenly kingdom appreciated!

From my last interview with Miss Dunn, I was in hopes that her heart was by this time "open" to receive the truth. I was, however, disappointed to find the unhappy girl, though still in great anxiety of mind, yet not only indisposed to accept the present offers of mercy, but sitting with her hands folded. "I am just waiting at the pool of ordinances, sir," she said. "I have had several interviews with a person who has had great experience in religion, and he says I cannot wait at a better place."

I said, "You may wait long enough there, and if peradventure, the cry be heard, 'Behold the bridegroom cometh,' whiles you are yet waiting, the *place* at which you waited will make very little difference to the destiny of your soul." I also asked why she waited, and how long she intended doing so.

"I am just waiting God's appointed time, sir," and am preparing my heart, by attending to His word and ordinances, meanwhile."

I answered, that in the whole book of revelation, God spoke of no time to save sinners, except the

present; to speak of waiting for which, was not only an incompatibility of terms, but involved the presumption of propounding a different mode of salvation than that which infinite love and wisdom had devised; and that, though *reading*, she was, in nowise, attending to His Word, whilst not complying with its offers, its entreaties, and commands.

I said, also, that in the whole of the Saviour's ministry and works of mercy, during His sojourn on earth, He had never desired any of Adam's race to *wait;* that we, assuredly, read of none applying to Him in sincerity, *who ever wished to do so;* nor of any instance of His sovereign intervention of love and power, without the co-operation of the individual.—"Stretch forth thy hand!" the hand was stretched out. "Arise, and walk!" the healed instantly obeyed. She whose faith had made her whole, had first touched the hem of her Saviour's garment. And he who received proof of mercy's triumph at the eleventh hour, had already sent the outgoings of his soul to a kingdom which was not of this world.

"Do you believe these statements?" I asked.

"I must, unless I disbelieve the Bible," was the acknowledgement; "but, sir," she nevertheless added, I am not healed, and I have, therefore, no power to stretch forth my hand."

I said, this brought us back to the commencement of our former argument; that in no case does the evidence precede the act, at the same time adding, that "to as many as received Him, to them

gave He power to become the sons of God;" that the thing to be believed in order to obtain this "power," was simply that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin; and that it would assuredly cleanse hers, if brought to this fountain in faith and true penitence.

"There is very little difference betwixt us," she replied. "I believe what the Bible says, that Jesus died for sinners, and that they who believe on Him shall not perish. I *only* cannot lay claim to it, myself."

"My dear friend," I said, "the one is *only* the perception, the other is the possession of religion; and betwixt the one and the other there is a great difference. The one may be likened to a person surveying the feast; the other, seated at the banquet; with this failing in the similitude, indeed, that the things of God cannot be seen without being realized, cannot be understood without being made *our own*. The one," I added, "may, moreover, be likened to a man who, being told that his house is going to fall, one of safety being, at the same time, pointed out to him, believes the statement, but, at the same time, abides in the falling tabernacle;—And is crushed beneath its ruins. The other, to him who, believing the statement, acts upon it, betaking himself to the house of refuge;—And is saved. With this failing still in the similitude," I added, "that the latter, on betaking himself to the house of refuge, experienced joy and peace, which he, nor any other, ever tasted, or could taste, in the former tabernacle.

"Yes, sir, I know it," she replied; "but the faith to which you refer is the 'gift of God.' 'Tis this, and this alone, for which I am waiting; and what else should I, can I, do?"

In urging the means which Miss Dunn must herself use, I confess I was thinking of the use of some such terms as the "eye of faith," or, "the hand of the soul," which, in all likelihood, had been as little understood as some of my other allusions. But Miss Oliphant, having just before entered the room,—and woman ever apt in simplifying—"There must," she said, "be the *moving* of your own heart to Jesus, Emily,—the acquiescence must go before the attainment, and submission before enjoyment."

"Your illustration is very apt, ma'am," I said, contrasting, as I was, in my own mind, the simplicity and more natural bearing of the term "moving," with those I had intended to use.

"Not very apt, I fear, sir," she said, "as I can make no illustrations, except from what I myself feel, or may have felt."

Thus I perceived that in the things of religion, experience is the best lexicon. I also saw that it is the best looking-glass, as Miss Dunn seemed to see her own short-comings more clearly in Miss Oliphant's single allusion, than she appeared to have done in all my reasoning.

"The 'moving of the heart!'" she said, "that is just what I want: it is because my soul is passive, that I do not, or that I cannot believe."

"Yes," I added, "there will, I doubt not, be more souls lost in the wastes of impassiveness, than buried beneath all the mountains of more actual transgression."

But believing that Miss Dunn had, in her own female companion, a better teacher than myself, I urged her to attend to that companion's further instructions, begging her also to keep in mind that it but aggravated the evil to see the error without correcting it—to acknowledge the passiveness without stirring up the soul to activity and duty.

Thus I took my leave, and thus I now take leave of my friend and correspondent.

H

LETTER IX.

MY DEAR ·

"To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven: a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak; a time to love, and a time to hate." Yet mar thinketh in his heart that it is not so; and, lo! because the present time answereth not his purpose, and fulfilleth not the desire of his soul, he diggeth unto him a pit of despair into which he descendeth, and of the accomplishment of his expectation he saith, it shall never be. Yea, considering not that he is but of yesterday, and that his largest conception, when laid in the balance with the vastness of the superintending providence around him, is more puny than the worm he tr ads on, and more short-lived than the ephemera, contemplating the brevity of whose span of existence, he marvels wherefore it was created.

Thus she, who bending over the new-made grave of him in whom her love and joy were centered, weeneth not that her weeds shall ever give place to brighter attire, or that to her the sun shall ever warm aught on which it shines ; but that the grief of to-morrow shall be as that of to-day ; or that the only change which can come over the desolation of her heart is, that it shall become more desolate. To condolence she listeth not ; with the monitions of solace she has no sympathy ; and of time, the universal victor of grief's poignancy, she saith, "It is utterly vain ;" also, when it is surmised that another shall yet smile upon her, scorn and wrath rise up in her soul, for she recketh no other time than the present. He too, whom evil days surround, who, when fortune frowned, experienced friends to fail, and the strength of his arm and the hope of his heart to depart, he believeth not that in prosperity he shall ever again gird his goings, that friendship shall be rekindled when a warmer sunshine rests upon him, and that energy and hope shall return at the dawn of a brighter day ; he, moreover, wotteth not that they who to-day contemn his adversity, perchance shall be themselves, to-morrow, in as low a plight, for he forgetteth that there is "a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which was planted." Behold, also the lover: mighty in impatience, he likens delay to death ; absorbed in what he considers his own peculiar, or to this time unheard-of feelings, circumstances, or alliances, he contemneth the duties of

life, and mocketh him who voucheth the possibility of importance belonging to another's pursuits than his; and whereas he concentrateth all that is good and great, lovely and loveable, in one object, and in that solely, he saith thus it must be, and thus alone; and, verily, he comprehendeth not that his happiness, notwithstanding, can yet be bound up in another; and that the beauty of her, whom to-day he counted supreme of woman, shall to-morrow have no attraction; yet, of all in which he most egregiously deceived himself, is that which related to time; and whereas he conceived that no period could be like the present, he withal opined that in none but the present could the fulfilment of his desires be realized.

And as it is with the new-made relict, with the man of evil-days, and with the lover, even thus it was with the scribe who now notes these things. On the first morning after my arrival in town, when visiting the house of Mrs. Black, and finding Miss Millicent absent, doubtfulness arising in proportion to my disappointment, I supposed not that I should ever again see her for whom I was in quest; or in finding her, I felt certified, that I could never be so happy as at that, the *preseut,* time, I should have been in accomplishing my desires. Thus I felt, and thus I feared, because, with that littleness of conception which cleaves to humanity, I looked but at the present, and pondered not that " to every thing there is a time."

And yet, as when this morning I wended my way to the habitation of Maria Millicent, I mused on the futility of my past ideas, and marvelled that I now felt happier in contemplating an interview than I could *then* have been in realizing it.

Giving my name to the servant, or to the person who opened the door to me, it was long, unpolitely long, as I thought, until Miss Millicent entered the room, when at last presenting herself, I could not help inwardly exclaiming, "Surely old things are passed away, and all things have become new." If, on my first sight of the long-lost one at Miss Dunn's, I thought her former promptitude and openness of character to have become tempered by prudence, I now perceived prudence itself to have become softened by sensibility, and refined by the most retiring of female attributes. I believe I was the first to speak, and said, "I am glad to see you, Miss Millicent, and to have found you after so long a time." I, however, made no further allusion to our first interview, feeling that to do so, were to open a wound which, though, perhaps, long healed by penitence, was yet subject to the shafts of shame, with all that corroding sensibility to which the upright bosom of the restored is still liable. There was at first a mutual embarrassment; but it was soon dispelled, for Christian principles give strength to the weakness of human feelings, and Christian love casts off restraint.

After a few formal remarks and rejoinders, however, we again sat silent: I, for my part, labouring for some other common-place observation to prevent an entire chasm in the conversation. Having, in former times, learnt that the words of him who breaketh silence after a "dead pause" are specially liable to be noted, and that he had needs say something very wise who first opens his lips on such a notable occasion; and knowing also my infirmity, that wisdom was not mine to speak, I am ashamed to own it, that I resorted to the most plebeian and common-place of all topics—the weather and the locality of the residence.

Subjection to forced or to cold formality, however, forms no part of Maria Millicent's natural, not to speak of her Christian, temperament. And breaking the next threatened "pause" herself, she rose, and giving me her hand with warm cordiality, though with the utmost delicacy and respect,—

"I may no longer conceal it from you, sir," she said; "you met me on a dark and ambiguous pathway, with my heart all but darker than my steps—you were sent a light to my feet and a lamp to my path—a girdle to my heart and a guide to my goings. As an outgoing to those feelings which it were alike painful and unjust to conceal, and as an expression of my gratitude, I now offer all I have to bestow for your kindness, which is the satisfaction you will have in knowing that you were this auspicious messenger."

"Praised be Heaven!" I replied, "which deigns to bless such unworthy means. To me it had been happiness itself to have been sent a defence to the helpless, but much more is it to have been a guide to happiness—and happiness that never ends."

I was indeed helpless, and found myself to be so," she replied. "Except Emily Dunn and another there was, so far as I know, not a single individual in this city to whom I had ever opened my lips but by constraint; and it was, sir, the first time in my life in which I had ever walked unprotected on an evening. But I only introduced the subject to give you the satisfaction of knowing what belonged to *your* part of it, not to intrude what pertained to *mine*.

This, I am sorry to say, like all that Miss Millicent said, though couched in courteous accents, was, nevertheless, accompanied by that peremptory tone which precluded my making any further reference to the subject. I saw also that, though striving hard to do so, it was yet with difficulty she repressed the rising tear. I, nevertheless, alluded to the disappointment I had felt on the morning on which I called at her lodging and found her to have left it. But this, I soon saw, was an allusion more painful than the other, as for some moments she could make no reply.

"I erred," said she at last, "in breaking an appointment; but pray let the error sink amongst my other inconsistencies; all of which it must, I know,

require a wide breach in remembrance to forget, and a wide mantle of charity to cover. Yet if that mantle can be woven from penitence and Christian consistency, from now pursuing truth and its accompaniments, I hope still to be able to weave it. *The forgetfulness*," she added in a low murmuring tone, "must, however, be your boon, and not mine."

"My dear madam," I said, "I feel that there is nothing to *forget*; but were it otherwise, there is in that robe—that perfect robe of our Redeemer's righteousness, that which covers all inconsistencies whiles we yet 'walked according to the course of this world.' And ever as one Christian sees in another the richness or the marks of this infinite attire, love, 'the love of the brethren,' fills his heart, and fills his eyes, so that even past enormities, if such, in any instance, *did* belong to the days in which he 'walked according to the power of the prince of the air,' are all—all—lost in this flood of heaven-born love, which distinguishes the family of the living God, and by which all men shall know that they are His disciples."

"Yes, blessed be God!" returned my auditor, as the tear of heavenly love started to her eye,—"blessed be God that this divine system implants in the breast of the disciple not only love to the great I AM, but also to the fellow-christian, of whatever name, or of whatever nature. Beyond love to the Deity, he had else felt himself to be a desolate being, instead of a member of that happy family, the

bond of which is love. And," the speaker added after a short pause—" and but for this 'common bond,' I had not now met you, sir."

After some further remarks on this subject, I wished to have told Miss Millicent that it was my disappointment, and not her inconsistency, that had rested on my mind. But knowing that silence is least apt to offend the sensibility that shrinks from observation, I made no further reference to the subject; and the lady seemed relieved, though still embarrassed, at the introduction of more general topics. Finding her to become more unrestrained and communicative, however, I again alluded to her hasty leaving of the lodging on the morning after our first interview, and feared she must have subjected herself to inconvenience by it.

" Excuse me, sir," she said, after a pause, during which various passions seemed to be struggling for the mastery: " excuse me, sir, and I shall be explicit, for however much prudence may be attached, and justly attached to reserve, I yet feel *concealment* to be at variance with my nature, and beneath the dignity of yours. And, believe me, I felt my whole soul degraded by the hiddenness and ambiguity in which you must have conceived my whole movements to have been warped. Yes, sir," she added, " I felt that concealment is alike at variance with upright feelings, with true friendship, and with every noble sentiment."

Perceiving how much the speaker felt her own position identified and impugned by these sentiments, I replied, "I was afraid she might have thought me intrusive, or vulgarly inquisitive."

"No, sir," she answered, "but I felt that *I* was meanly secretive, and that you might naturally have supposed me under subjection to that guilt which necessarily invokes concealment. I, however, assure you that my leaving the lodging so hurriedly was merely because I could not meet a man of correct principles in such a tabernacle of Satan; whilst I concealed that to which I betook myself merely because my pride would not allow me to meet you in such a humble dwelling. The latter was, indeed, a pusillanimous feeling; but as in the uniform ways of nature there are no sudden transitions, Providence does not seem to have fitted cur natures for exactly meeting these when at any time we bring such upon ourselves."

"My dear lady," said I, "I believe Providence seldom sends us any change or transition, without fitting us for it."

"I agree with you, sir," she replied; "but I cannot say that mine was exactly sent by Providence; that is, that having by my own imprudence stepped without the covert of Providence's wing, my sudden and unhappy transition was, so to speak, brought on by my own misconduct, and not by His decrees; I mean by an infringement of His laws, and not by

acting in uniformity with them, else, doubtless, had I been better prepared for my trial."

Conceiving that these allusions must have had reference to the advertisement referred to in a former letter, or that *it* must have had reference to them, I mentioned the circumstance, when I soon perceived that Miss Millicent had hitherto been ignorant of it. She looked not less agitated than surprised, and though striving to maintain her firmness, I perceived that her whole frame shook. I saw, moreover, that her native openness of disposition was struggling with the secretiveness she had been condemning. Wherefore looking round the apartment, as if already oblivious of the information I had given, I made a casual remark on a piano standing by; for though repudiating duplicity, I do not like the honesty that loves to banquet at the expense of wounded feelings.

But, as I formerly intimated, Miss Millicent is not the person to shroud the presence of painful or unpleasant feelings in the guise of formality.

Paying no attention to my observation on the instrument of music, "Until this moment," she said, "I was not aware of the announcement of which you speak. It grieves me much—— But, excuse me, sir, I shall return immediately," she added, hurriedly leaving the room.

Notwithstanding this intimation of a speedy return, however, I waited long—so long that I had just pulled out my watch, when a maid-servant entered, saying Miss Millicent had requested her to apologise

for it not being in her power to see me again at present, but that she should be happy to receive a visit from me at any future period. "Woman! thy stability is written in sand," I said to myself on descending the staircase. I was disconcerted, as there was yet much in Miss Millicent's movements which I could not comprehend, and which I had hoped would be elucidated by further discourse. I do not, however, write to animadvert, and shall therefore conclude my epistle.

LETTER X.

My dear ——,

"She to whom much was forgiven, the same loved much." Also, she who came from far to view the riches of Solomon, was more entranced by their immensity than they who, brought up by the "Porch," had witnessed their advancing accumulation, and had been familiar with all the vastness of their variety. He whose feet have stuck in the lowest depths of the "pit," and fastest in the "miry clay," will, perchance, be the fleetest and the brightest, when his feet are set upon the streets of pure gold, and he runs the errands of his Lord's behests. But even before entering the golden city, whiles his feet are yet "set upon a rock," he who had lain lowest amongst the pots, will oft-times be found diffusing a holier and a brighter influence around him, than they who from childhood have been dwellers in Bethsaida and Chorazin. "He hath filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he hath sent empty away."

They who have been cradled beneath the "showers and dews" of religious intercourse, who, from earliest remembrance, have been accustomed to the voice of song and supplication at morning and at eventide, and to whose ears the sayings of the Sacred Book are familiar as household words, to these the wondrous things of which they tell have, in some measure, become "common," by having been linked and initiated with the ordinary associations of childhood and youth. Thus, in such individuals the works of Omnipotence call not forth the same adoring wonder, as when first bursting on the view of him to whose mind and imagination the "marvellous things" in Revelation were a book sealed within and without; who, whether of the "wonders" at the "Red Sea," or at "Zoan's field;" of the history, from the manger at Bethlehem to the ascension at Bethany, had taken no note, but erst had looked upon the sacred records as a dream that hath been told. Even so have I found it with a humble saint, a page of whose history I shall now record.

Of Maria Millicent and of Emily Dunn I have told you much; of the one going on her way rejoicing, because cleaving to Him who is mighty to save, and who willeth that "the daughters of Zion be joyful in their King;" and of the other still mourning, (alas! still also sinning,) because, though standing with her face towards heaven, yet refuses to enter the heavenly pilgrimage by the "wicket gate" of the Lord of Heaven's appointing. Of these

two I have told you much. And though having told you less of Anna Oliphant, I now find that of her I might have told you more than of either.

Miss Oliphant was, it seems, no sooner brought from the fearful pit of sin, when and where she meditated self-destruction, than she indeed presented her heart a living sacrifice to God; nor was the smoke of the incense ever permitted to become faint. Like Him whose cross she bore, she had oft and again "continued all night in prayer" to Him, who in return poured upon her that anointing of heaven which told her that her prayers had come up as a memorial before God, and that her sins were all forgiven. This caused her still to linger at Heaven's gate, filling her with the blessedness of that man who *feels* in his heart that the Lord will not impute iniquity. These, and many other most pleasing traits, I had from an intimate acquaintance of hers. But it is only what I have myself witnessed, within these few days, that I shall now relate.

I received a message, four days ago, requesting medical advice for Miss Oliphant, who was considered to be dangerously ill. On my first glance at the patient, I perceived that she was labouriug under a virulent attack of typhus; and after having prescribed for her, "Pray, sir," she said, "do you think me dying?" Giving her an evasive reply, "Sir," she answered with great calmness, but with greater earnestness, "Sir, I am not afraid to die; but, O! if I am about to leave this world, be so

kind and true as tell me, for I have an act of great importance to perform." I said I feared the seeds of death were in the disease, and that mortal hand could not pluck them out; but that I should do what was in my power.

Waiting not for the latter part of my reply, "Bring me a pen," she instantly exclaimed; but perceiving the fire in her eye, and I may add, the flame upon her cheek, I said she must court repose, and that if she had any important affairs to settle, she might dictate and another write. "Love is strong as death," she replied; "another's hand may not reach his heart; perchance the gay will give ear when death guides the pen. It is to one who greatly wronged me, but whom I still love; and who, though on earth scorned me, I should yet love to reign with me in heaven."

Perceiving that to restrain her desire were only to encrease her excitement, I permitted her writing materials to be brought, leaving instruction for her to be kept quiet so soon as the task was performed.

With a sick heart, and a burning brain, and with her hand scarcely able to trace the letters, supported also by another, I understand, she sat up in bed, and wrote as follows, when the increase of her malady prevented further proceedure:—

"William! my once loved William!

"The weight of death presses heavily on the hand that now writes. My words must need be few,

because few the remaining beats of the breast that breathes them. Already I feel the glass emptying with all the rapidity with which its last sands run; and to the soul every moment is an era, when the last particles are thus so swiftly turning in their departing whirlpool. Such are mine. But with death pointing the pen, with eternity hurrying the task, and with the struggle of the last enemy all but too much for the mortal frame, I snatch a moment from my winding sheet—a moment to urge you to hear the voice which in life you disregarded, and to ask you to accept the love which *on earth* you spurned. I write not to upbraid, for there is no upbraiding in the land to which I want you to follow me, and in which the inhabitants receive a new name, and are entirely purified from all that debased them below.

"I write not to tell you what I have told you before, that I have long since forgiven you; for little shall boot the forgiveness of the worm, if we ask not forgiveness of Him who formed it, and if the sting of conscience be still within. I write not to ask you to drop a tear on my early grave when you see it, or to remember her who tenants it. (Yet, O! set not your foot so much as on the turf when you pass it by.) I write not of these: I write!—I write!—to entreat you to go to the manger of Bethlehem, to follow Him who was cradled there—to follow Him through all His life of purity, of love, and good-will toward men; note also His sufferings by the way, and when ye come to the place called Gethsemane,

ponder the prayer, the sweat, and the agony. Go thence to Calvary, and throwing yourself at the foot of the tree that was there erected, confess your *whole* sins, and cast them all into the blood-dyed stream that there flowed. Look up to Him who has a pardon for the sinner, and who came to save the chief of sinners. With your foot upon the cross, and your eye lifted up to Him who bled there, ask pardon, and you will find it.

"But the battle wages fiercer and fiercer. My hand wavers; 'tis the premonition of death, and it can now no longer give language to the heart that once loved you, and still yearns with love over your soul; else much had I to tell you of the wondrous things to be there revealed—of the love and heavenly life to be experienced by thus prostrating yourself at this blood-stained 'glorious Calvary.'

"I thought I could add no more, and yet methinks I feel a respite—it may be short. What argument shall I urge to tempt your compliance with my request? Shall I go back to the love you bore to me, or the innocence that brightened your brow, when, a country boy and girl, we conned our tasks upon the allers, or pulled the bulrush and the wild-flower by the water-course? Ah, no! Shall I descend to the wailings of the bottomless pit, and tell you to escape for your life? Not even this. I will tell you—I will tell you of the agony and the sweat, of the scourge, and the crown of thorns; and of the love that was before the hills began. These arrested her

who now writes, with death witnessing the handwriting; they have ever since been her song in the house of her pilgrimage, which had else been very dark; and now they are a light to her soul in the shadow of death; they are a stay to her feet, which else had stumbled on the dark mountains.

"These are true words, death uses no unmeaning metaphors. They are also my last words to you, for death denies me more. Deny me not my request; and O! if your heart should indeed be moved to it, remember that ye put the shoes from off your feet, for the place to which I urge your steps is holy ground.

"Death calls—I must yield the lingering pen—Farewell!

"ANNA OLIPHANT."

On my visit next morning, I was happy to find my patient to have rallied considerably. She was also in a sound sleep, which I considered a most favourable symptom; and as I would not allow her to be awaked, a friend, who was waiting upon her, after shewing me the foregoing letter, (which the writer had requested her to do) gave me some few particulars of the person to whom it was addressed.

Brought up together in rural innocence and seclusion, Miss Oliphant and he had been devoted companions from childhood, From time immemorial, he had decked her brow with the burgonet of the bulrush; for her he had dared the danger of the precipice,

or whatever could render him valiant in her young eyes; nor cared he for others who claimed his "favours." They were the chosen twain. And on arriving at that period when love made the girl more coy, and the youth more respectful, their affection abated not: their pastime giving place to poetry, and their school tasks to books of deeper erudition, which they often studied together. In the process of years, a rich inheritance fell to the lot of the youth's father. Shortly after this, Anna's widowed mother died. But the two events tended only to cement more closely the long-lived loves of the couple; and, by Anna at least, marriage was visioned in its fairest picture.

The day was all but fixed for the long anticipated nuptials, which were to take place in three months, and every collateral incident was covered with beauty and sunshine.

The rest is dark and direful, for guilt was in the cloud that rolled across the bright blue sky.

Whilst the repentant girl languished in grief and shame, the hardened lover became coy and thence cold—his visits to the wronged one being ultimately withdrawn.

The shame-stricken damsel's feelings could not now be described, for who can tell the struggles of the soul in such a case? Who, but she who has felt them, can describe the powerful emotions that contend with every reflection of the female who has made the first mournful deviation from rectitude?

Who, but she who has felt it, can tell the agony of the soul of her who, seeing character blighted, feels also the desolation of hope departed, for with conventional customs the two are synominous? Repentance cannot restore her; amendment cannot ameliorate the sufferings of her shame, nor the most gracious deportment procure one smile from those whose only smile she now seeks. No! for though God have forgiven her, though the Saviour of men have not upbraided her, the daughters of Eve have spurned her from their side; and it is in the society of her own sex, not in that of the other, in which she wishes now to lift up her head.

Thus the remembrance of past innocence, former respectability, present guilt with all its degradation, urging onward to despair, and, added to these, the scorn of him who extinguished her joys, and whom *she still loves;* these often hurry the soul onward on a more intricate career of sin, or, extinguishing every hope of returning happiness, urge it yet more madly to the last act of wickedness of which it is capable.

This was the case with Anna Oliphant, having, even at this early period of her history, thought of terminating a life of sin and sorrow, as if the spirit oppressed with guilt in this world, could elude the hand of an avenging God in the next.

From this, by the grace of God, she was, however, prevented; and sending once more for her plighted husband, told him she still loved him, for woman seems to be infatuate and her love indestructible;

that on his promise she now rested, either to be as happy, in the fulfilment of it, as a forlorn orphan in her friendless condition could be; or in the breach of it, to inherit all the miseries of woman in her most degraded situation. But "the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel;" he who before declared that his only joy was in her smile, and that his death was in her frown, was now unmoved at the voice of her tears—he who in a long succession of years had vowed by every thing sacred to become her husband, and who on the subject opened not his mouth but in rapture—now spoke with great callousness of his father's objections, and his *own change of sentiments*; at the same time offering to make what he termed a "liberal settlement" upon her.

"At this proposal, every feeling of my nature arose in a flame of fire against him," said Miss Oliphant, in formerly relating the interview to the friend who communicated it to me; "and had my life been in his hand, I had at that moment spurned it from me; and even in death, I thought, I could have trampled it in his presence. 'We part never again to meet,' said I. His countenance grew pale, he trembled, and slowly putting out his hand, took a reluctant hold of mine. I said, 'I stay but to ask, if not to demand, one favour—that if you spurn me for your wife, you, at least, revoke your last words, nor stain my brow with the assumption that for a moment I could have listened to them.' Becoming more tremulous than before, he yet, instead of revoking, be-

gan to justify his sentiments; which he did by urging the frailty of human nature. I said, 'Leave me, and add not madness to my misery, nor mock the God you have offended, by casting your sin upon your Maker.' But he still persisted in a course of self-justification, which being at my expense, half-frantic and in despair, I left the room."

"Soon after this," Miss Oliphant continued in her narrative, "soon after this, I left my native village, never again to revisit it, though never to forget its associations, its walks and its water-course, its healthful breeze, and its bright blue sky, its rocks, its broom, and its bulrushes—all—all associated with happy days and the bright remembrances of a happy hearth; and all associated with present scorn and shame, with character which once was blameless, but which now was *lost*."

It appears to have been about a twelvemonth after this period when I put the tract into Miss Oliphant's hand, on Leith pier; her feelings in regard to which have been heretofore noted.

By the time I had obtained these particulars, my patient had awaked from her protracted sleep, though, contrary to my expectation, her eye was wild and wavering, which I feared to be premonitory of delirium. Making an abrupt remark to me on the agonies of death, I feared she might be distressing herself on that subject, and replied that I did not suppose that the actual amount of sufferings in the

case of dissolution was what many people suppose it to be.

"I believe the last struggles to be in the most cases severe," she replied. "I am the last but one of a large family. We once were twelve, who now are twain—my ten brothers and sisters!—I saw them all die. Each suffered much; each one thought it a serious thing to combat death. I also feel it so; for close, O! how close is the connection betwixt the soul and the body!" Partly to divert her mind from such a subject, I repeated what I had before stated, that her case was not beyond the possibility of recovery. Her eye becoming more radiant, "I ask you not to tell me of life," she said, "for already I have life begun beyond the skies; but, sir, if you can lengthen my span until I can do something for *him*—that were then a boon."

Without pretending ignorance of the person to whom she alluded, I said, "He knows how he has wronged you; and associating which with the solicitude and the love expressed in your letter, I should say, so far as human conception is concerned, that if he regard not it, neither would he regard though one rose from the dead."

"But, sir, he *once* had a tender conscience, as well as a loving heart, and who knows—"

At this the voice of the sick faultering, and wishing to check excitement, I waved the subject.

Next morning I was happy to perceive the eye of my patient to be much more pleasing and serene,

the fever being also greatly abated. I had not, however, examined her other symptoms, when a country gentleman, with spurs on his boots and a riding whip in his hand, hurriedly and unceremoniously walked into the room.

"Sir," I said, "this is a sick chamber, and I presume you are mistaken." He, however, heeded me not, but walking forward to the sick bed, there stood transfixed, the sick inmate seeming also in a state of stagnation. Again urging upon him that he had made a mistake, he for some time only replied with a vacant stare; but at last stammered forth the monosyllables, "It's *no* you I have to do with." "Friend," I replied, "you have nevertheless to 'do' with decency and respect." But deigning me not the slightest attention, "Anna Oliphant!" he vacantly uttered, and then faintly proffered his hand; his knees, I perceived, smiting against each other as he did so. The other turning away her head, "Too late!" she answered, "I am not able for it, else were it well that you should see a Christian die.' "Anna," he repeated, "Anna, you will not die, you will say you forgive me, and live and be mine." "I go," the sick one at last replied, "I go where they neither marry nor are given in marriage; but where the Lamb, the Bridegroom's wife hath made herself ready. *Once* I had been happy, happy, happy to have lived with you on earth; but now thrice more happy should I be to breathe the air that you breathe, to reign with you for ever, and ever, in that land

where the inhabitants are as the angels of heaven who serve Him day and night; and where there is no more sickness and no more sorrow."

Miss Oliphant then covered her face with the bed-linen, her feelings being overpowering.

And though I feared such an interview was sufficiently likely to increase her fever.; yet having known of instances where powerful excitement, producing a re-action, wrought a cure in the patient, I thought that this, perchance, might accomplish what I feared to be beyond the power of medicine. I, moreover, could not now prevent it; and setting a chair, I asked the young man to be seated; but my words seemed as much unheard as before, he still stood bending ovor the weeping invalid. And looking at the sorrowing man, "Ah!" thought I, "how momentary is the gratification of sin, how enduring its misery! On what slight grounds is the promise ofttimes broken, but how awful seems the broken vow when death stamps its breach!"

At last, uncovering her face, "Time was, William," she said, "when my tears had flowed from other feelings, and when they had not been, as now, unblent with the loves of earth. But the things of time are at this moment lost in those of eternity. I, nevertheless, go back to the time when kindness kindled the fire of your eye, when bravery girdled your goings, and purity dignified your steps. I think also of the love you then bore to me; and when I say, 'Is this *he* who shall be numbered with the

mean man and the murderer, with the devil and his angels?' 'tis this that makes me weep: also when I still behold the traces of those features that *then* beamed in youthful love and innocence, 'tis this that opens the floodgates to my tears, when death has left me few tears to weep; for O! the ameliorations to physical pain, and the sources of physical solace are few when the body is in its last stage of preparation for the grave."

The gentleman covering his face with his hands, and Miss Oliphant still weeping, I suggested that the former should retire to another room, until both became more composed.

"One word more," said the sick one, becoming more and more excited, "William—William Baynes, have you complied with my request? Went ye to the manger? What saw ye at Gethsemane? Bowed ye at Calvary? What found ye in Him who hang upon tho tree? Was it that which washed your heart from its foulest stain, embued it with faith, turned faith into love, love into springs of true repentance, and these to purposes of humble obedience?"

These interrogations being put with such an energy and rapidity, as seemed to spring from more than mortal strength; "Compose yourself," I said, "and give your visitor time to ponder well such questions before answering them."

"Bid the last sands stay, or the last ember burn; but bid not death wait, for his hand brooks no exigency; and bid not mortal delay laying hold of eter-

nal life; for that which is offered for present acceptance may bide no procrastination."

I again urged the necessity of composure; and leading also the young man out of the room, I thereupon began to urge upon him the duty of submission, and of making the best improvement of the span that might yet be meted out, whether to himself or to his afflicted friend. But the excitement which had, in some measure, lighted his bewildered eye, evanishing as he left the sick chamber, he now stared as silently and obliviously as on my first remonstrance with him.

"Can ye *cure* her?" he at last asked, interrupting my discourse with as little deference as if he had been merely breaking silence.

"Rest and composure are at present the best remedies," I had informed him; and was furthermore describing to him the nature of the malady, when again interrupting me as unceremoniously as before.

"Man! what's the use of all your learning, if you cannot cure HER?" he impatiently asked, a large tear simultaneously rolling in his otherwise vacant eye.

At this my sympathy was greatly moved, and I said, "My dear sir, do you know of balm in Gilead, and a Physician there? *He*, in some cases, medicates when man cannot; and He, in *all* cases, sustains those who cast their burden on Him."

On commencing my reply, the countenance of Mr. Baynes became peculiarly animated; but ere I had

concluded, he walked disconsolately out of the room, rubbing the tear from his eye.

Words were indeed vain. And after prescribing for my patient, I left the house, with injunctions that the new arrived should not be allowed to re-enter the sick-room for some time at least.

Sending for him in the course of a little, however, as I understand, "William," the invalid proceeded, "I am now recovered from that excitation which the first sight of you induced. I have a few words to say, and I hasten to disclose them, while the sun or the light, or the moon, or the stars be not darkened. I have seen the tears you have now shed. They reminded me of the tears you mingled with mine when I became an orphan, and when my dying mother blessed you, and said, 'Take good heed to my daughter.' But darker, William, they were darker than the tears you then shed. Was it guilt, William, that made them flow in less crystal-like channels than they then did? If so, the purifying blood, which the former yet needed, can still purify these. But I fear, William, you wept them not for sin, not for yourself, but for one who needs them not. *I* need them not, William. I am entering the land where no tears are. Let me caution you against setting them down as tears of true repentance; or to suppose that, even should they 'run as rivers from your eyes,' that they could wash one sin from your heart, or place you one step nearer heaven. The broken spirit, which is a pleasing sacri-

fice to God, is that which says, 'Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned;' nor can the incense of this sacrifice ascend, except as sprinkled with the blood of the Lamb, nor except upon the censor of Him who is an Advocate with the Father."

"Anna, I have wronged you," the other replied, "and unless you live and receive restitution from my hands, I can neither appease my conscience, nor obtain the favour of Him who avengeth the cause of the innocent."

"William," she answered, "how far, how very far thou art from the kingdom of heaven! Your sins against your fellow-mortals, however great, are as nothing when compared with your sins against Him who 'made man upright,' and against Him who bore their burden on the tree."

"My sins against my fellow-men have been very great, as you yourself know," returned the youth.

"Yea, doubtless," said the other, "and greater are they in the eye of the pure and omnipotent One than they ever were in mine or can ever be in yours. Therefore delay not. Flee to the blood of the cross, without which they can never—never be atoned for, I may not longer urge you, William: I hear a voice that calls me home. *My* sins are also very great, but washed in my Redeemer's blood—covered with His righteousness. I yet hear the voice that calls me, saying, 'Arise my love, my fair one, arise and come away.' Yes! it is the voice of my beloved

saying, 'Rise and come away, for the winter is past and the rain is over and gone."

On my next visit to my patient, I was happy to find her fever much abated. She was discoursing to Mr. Baynes, who was still there, and seemed to be a willing auditor.

"The happiness which to-day sits upon your features tells me you are now much better," I said.

"I am indeed happy," she answered, "so happy in the prospect of heaven, that, methinks, I must needs be near its portals."

"You have had many delightful views and foretastes of heaven, even in days of health," I replied.

"Many, many, else could I have counted but little on the feelings I now experience. I should have been afraid to enter heaven had I not had treasures in it. I had not dreamt of joyful fellowship there, had I had no sweet communings with the Lord of heaven *here*."

"These are indeed *material* for entering heaven with," I answered.

"They inspire me with the most delightful anticipations of it; but even with such on my heart, and in my eye, and filling my soul with joys, the number or the nature of which I cannot express, I yet dare not venture forward, except as—

> 'My soul looks back to see
> The burden *Thou* didst bear,
> Whilst hanging on the accursed tree;
> And hopes her guilt was there.'"

Mr. Baynes retired shortly after my arrival, though, as I perceived, not without sundry signals from the sick-nurse to do so. And accosting me as I withdrew, "Now!" said he, with an arbitrary triumph upon his countenance, as if about to unfold some particular victory, the knowledge of which would peculiarly vex me—"Now, you see she's better—Won't she soon be *well*?"

I said, I did think so on my first entering the room; but I now feared that though Miss Oliphant was much easier, it was ease premonitory of death, and, indeed, indicative of the body already returning to the earth.

I had scarcely concluded these words, when the gentleman, without deigning any reply, stalked past me, rolling his large blue eyes as obliviously as on former occasions.

Next morning, on visiting the sick chamber, I found the patient yet more happy, and the gentleman still beside her; but it was happiness derived from no attentions of man. She was entering the joy of her Lord. Her last words were—"Thou art the resurrection and the life. Thou wilt carry me through the valley and the shadow of death; and, all unworthy as I am, Thou wilt lift me up before an assembled world."

"Is this," said I, "her whom the lover rejected, whom society proscribed, from whom her own sex, even in her penitence, stood vigilantly aloof? It is the same! And yet—and yet, of her 'shall *not* the

Son of Man be ashamed when He cometh in the glory of His Father, with His holy angels." This, my dear ——, is not the manner of men.

This young man, I am informed, was of naturally good dispositions But one unrepented sin is a sure stepping-stone to a second, and it to a third. Repenting not, but hardening his heart in his sin against Anna Oliphant, he indulged in one sinful act after another, each of which, it need not be added, lent flint to his heart, and steel to his conscience, the aggravations increasing with the number of his crimes; nor had he ever before shewed the least signs of penitence Miss Oliphant had, it seems, written him once, and only once, from the time she had left her native village, and it was on receiving no answer to that letter that the act of suicide meditated with Miss Dunn had so taken hold of her mind.

Like many others, he had been brought up with a total disregard to even the outward observances of religion, so that what signs of penitence he *did* manifest were the more to be noted. From the manner in which he conducted himself after Miss Oliphant's death, I am, however, jealous that his goodness will be like "the morning cloud and the early dew;" for he seemed not to weep his tears at Calvary, the only abiding place of repentance, and he was, I fear, unwilling to lay his heart upon the altar of dedication to God, without which it is a vain oblation, and yields no incense for the soul.

But I forget: these are but the sentiments of puny short-sighted man—that of which he writes is CONVERSION, *the work of God*. And which is the "rough place" that, at the touch of the eternal Spirit, shall not become a plain?

I have only to add that Mr. Baynes waited in town, and attended the funeral. When his *stagnation* of soul had given way, and reflection had returned to its dwelling-place, his eye was expressive and intelligent. I, however, only saw him once after Miss Oliphant's death. Miss Millicent was then in company with him, and seemed to be speaking on some most important subject. But as of this lady, my next letter shall treat of divers particulars, I now close this, begging you to excuse the undue, but unforeseen length at which it has arrived.

LETTER XI.

"O! thou........in whom I see
Much that I love, and more that I admire,
.... ..thou freckled fair,
That pleasest, and yet shock'st me   I can laugh,
And I can weep, can hope, and can despond,
Feel wrath and pity, when I think on thee."

My dear ——,

I intimated in my last that the present should convey further intelligence concerning Maria Millicent—she through whom this correspondence originated, and with whose history, indeed, the other incidents, to this time related, have been connected and interwoven. Do not, however, from the quotation I have now given, suppose that I have espied some Magog iniquity, heretofore undiscovered, in the subject of this narration; or that a shade has now (entirely) come over the spirit of my dream. The incident calling it forth is, contrariwise, one the like

which other narrators are the most ready to record, and fictionists prone to imagine. As, however, you already know my aversion to all such records, I have anticipated your surmise, and have thus, I hope, taken your taunt by the forelock. But I proceed.

In a former epistle, I told you of the untimeous retreat of Miss Millicent, whiles we were yet d..-coursing on subjects which it was my desire to be more fully certified upon.

From the rustling and bustling, and medley of female clatter, proceeding from the lobby and adjoining room, I, at the time, half suspected that a fainting-fit was in process, which I have since learned was the case; as also that Miss Millicent did not recover for some considerable time. And familiar as you are with the wonder I have oftentimes expressed at the proneness of woman-kind to this peculiar species of indisposition; and, withal, at the lack of wisdom I always considered it displayed in the historian to relate, or the novelist to imagine, such—I have thus, as I hope, prevented your criticism by the foregoing citation and remarks.

Miss Millicent, indeed, seemed aware of the surmises I must have entertained, and also of the enigmatical nature of her own position, as she was more embarrassed on my second than on my former visit; seeming also wishful to give me explanations, which were evidently given at the expense of much personal feeling.

It was in one of these reluctantly given expositions, and in anwer to an enquiry I had made, that Maria informed me that she had left Mrs. Black's lodging with only one shilling in her pocket, the exorbitant landlady having iniquitously detained the most of her wardrobe; that, from day to day, she had gone from shop to shop, and from one dressmaking establishment to another, seeking the employment she could not obtain.

"Ah! sir," she said, "like many who never knew what want is, I had supposed that poverty is its own reward in its distance from what I termed our sublimer evils in a higher sphere. But I soon felt that it had its own pains, in which the former were entirely lost; and that all the sickly sentimentality, imaginary ills, and jejune disappointments of high life are not to be laid in the balance with them."

"I am happy to see you now in such comfortable circumstances," I said. To which receiving no reply, I added that blessings are the more appreciated when we have once known the want of them; and that sweet is pleasure after pain. But neither did this remark draw forth any acquiescence from my auditor: wherefore I changed the subject, making what I conceived to be some cogent reflections on the vanity of all earthly greatness. But comparison tends to contrarient, as well as natural inductions. Thus, my auditor, without seeming to appreciate my remarks, began to speak more freely on the nature of privations, and the misery oft-times belong-

ing thereunto. The speaker at last paused, and the tear stood fixed and full in her eyes.

I, however, soon perceived that they were tears of love and joy; the highest sublimities of her nature also encircling her brow.

"But, sir," added she, "there was sunshine in the storm. *The bow was in the cloud.*"

Miss Millicent then informed me that the most painful circumstance connected with the humble lodging to which she had resorted on the evening after quitting Mrs. Black's was, that it chanced to be but thinly partitioned from the company of such persons as her whole feelings recoiled from. The coarse gossip, with its loud laugh, was all incongenial to her feelings; there being also the song of the drunkard, and the repulsive jargon that accompanied it. Bethinking how impossible it were to live in the abode of such associates, or even to spend another night in the dwelling house, the thought suddenly darted upon her soul, "What if I have to spend an eternity with such characters? What! and if in that pit—

> 'Where, in amity deceitful,
> Linked in the awful bond of devils,
> Drunkards, liars, all the unholy,
> Rolled in hell's supremest evils."

"I had not, as in former times," said Miss Millicent, "the dissipating novel, the cheerful friend, or the gay amusement to assist me in quieting con-

science. My lamp had spent its last flame, and darkness filled my dreary chamber. The last drowsy laugh of the inmates of the tenement had been long lost in the deep sleep, which the absence of thought assisted to induce. I retired to rest, and with a trembling hand closed the scant curtains around me. But I slept not nor rested. A moral darkness, tenfold more dismal than the darkness of night, overspread my mind. Fancy, burdened with guilt, pourtrayed the horrors of that awful place where dwell all the unholy. I fancied myself shut up with the murderer and others, the hem of whose garment I could not touch. I remained several hours in this dreadful state, sometimes scarcely able to tell whether the objects that impressed me so powerfully were exhibited immediately to my mind, or through my bodily senses. Nature worn out, I at last fell into a slumber, but only to realize the feelings and visions of my fancy more powerfully. I fancied that fiends associated with me. I felt the murderer's breath embrace me, and the man of every unclean passion was, I thought, linked to me; whilst the drunkard, in the debasement and prostration of his senses, was to be my counsellor and companion. I thought I complained of these aggressions, urging my former position in society, intellectual as well as moral and material; but Satan, laughing me to scorn, told me there was no respect of persons in that place. On this, I recollected that all who were there had indeed despised or refused the offers of

mercy; and were, therefore, alike subject to the wrath of the Almighty. A recollection, which made my feelings yet more bitter; and my gall being yet embittered by an angel with a flaming sword, who I thought pointed to an empty mansion in heaven, which the Saviour had prepared for me, but which I had forfeited by refusing to take up His cross and to follow Him. At length the scene shifted, and the horror and confusion of my mind were succeeded by a comparative calm; but still my fancy was active, and amid the varied scenes and images which it pictured, a long obscure vista appeared before my view, which seemed to terminate in the land of light and beauty."

There Maria imagined that she saw a beloved sister conspicuous amongst the ransomed millions, stretching out her hands to her in the attitude of earnest importunity and welcoming invitation—that sister's dying charge, which had been long since uttered, falling anew upon her ear—"My sister, O! to meet in heaven!" This, Miss Millicent said, was her only sister, and upon her death-bed, had urged upon her the importance of attending to the things of another world, with such looks and words as had never been forgotten. The narrator's emotion in particular overcame her when describing the agony of her sister's soul upon one occasion, when after urging her suit in various ways, she burst forth in an exclamation, saying, "My sister, O to meet in heaven!" "I at the time," said Maria, "thought my sister's soul

had burst from its tenement; and, for the moment, I believed that it was my hardness of heart which had rent the soul from the body; yet did not this feeling, much as it distressed me, lead me to bring that heart to the cross; and though these, and many other of my sister's parting words, haunted me from day to day, I yet submitted not to Him whose spirit still graciously contended with me." And so vivid were the workings of her imagination, when the reminiscences of a dear departed sister were the materials it had to work with, that Miss Millicent was not certain but it was reality. Yet all, she thought, was as nothing, until advancing further, she saw HIM ON WHOSE HEAD ARE MANY CROWNS. "The sight," said Maria, "was overpowering—and I (alas!) *awoke.*"

The night passed away, but sorrow passed not with it; it yet ushered in the dawn of that day which was, to Miss Millicent, the beginning of days. The time was now come when she who had been arrayed in self-righteousness, was to be stripped of her rags—when that which was polluted with many sins, was to be made clean and beautiful as the dove whose wings are covered with silver and her feathers as with yellow gold.

"In the morning," said my narrator, "the landlady enquired what I wanted for breakfast, and if I wished to have dinner provided; and though this reminded me that my resources were few and scant, it yet troubled me not much; the things of time be-

ing for the while lost in those of eternity; and the thought of being excluded from the love and happiness of heaven, and linked to the hatred and unholiness of hell, absorbing all my thoughts. Long I had sat perusing the Scriptures, but only as a sealed book, or as a letter of condemnation. At last, I read these words, "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him might not perish, but should have eternal life." I was passing them by, as I had passed the others; but I *paused.* 'Are these addressed to me, and are they the words of Him who cannot lie?' said I. '*What more do I want?*' I again thought of my sins, when these words came to my remembrance, 'The blood of Jesus, God's Son, cleanseth from all sin.' And I felt that it would be awfully wicked to disbelieve the word of God. For a moment I thought I saw the blessed Saviour stretching out His arms to me, as if there had not been another sinner on earth, and, under all the galling burdens that pressed my spirit, addressing me in His endearing words, 'Come unto me, ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." A beam of joy flashed on my forlorn heart. Methought I heard a voice from Heaven reverse the sentence of condemnation that for ever sounded in my ears. I durst not—I could not doubt the willingness and power of God to save me. My heart responded, 'Lord, to whom shall I go but unto Thee? Thou hast the word of eternal life, and I believe, and am sure, that Thou

art the Son of the living God.' I knew it not at the time, sir," she added with peculiar emotion; "but in looking back upon that period, I think I must have heard the Saviour himself saying, 'Do ye now believe?' And O! sir, what an infinitude of meaning I felt there was in BELIEVING.

"On the next night," said Maria, "it was long until I slept; for having found Him whom my soul loved, I made prayer and supplications unto Him, and 'would not let Him go.' When slumber at last came upon me, my fancy was again busy. I thought all my sins stood before me, and the law which I had broken, demanded its penalty; but pointing to the cross, I said, 'Behold the penalty and behold the price!' And feeling as if I held something in my hand, 'There,' said I, 'is my pardon!—

——— 'Tis bought with blood,
With blood divine, of Him I made my foe.'

"I then," continued Maria, "thought I clasped it to my heart, which so changed my nature and my affections, as made me feel that I would love holiness and hate sin evermore."

Having perceived the speaker's peculiar emotion in referring to her deceased sister, in the foregoing narration, I now, reverting to that part of it, made some observations on the happiness which must be experienced by the saints above on their first recognition of one another. The other, however, reminded me that in her "visions of the night," even

the presence of a long-lost and dearly-loved sister was as nothing on seeing Him at whose feet "they cast their crowns." "And yet," she added, her feelings the while overpowering her, "and yet, sir, you know not what a sister she was, nor of her revelations from heaven, nor of the earnestness with which she entreated and conjured me to meet her there."

Expressing my anxiety to know something more of the deceased, for aside from higher motives, I also thought that an account of the one sister might develope something in the history of the other; and on expressing this feeling, Miss Millicent rose and opened her desk; but after fumbling irresolutely for some time amongst some papers, she again shut it, in doing which she appeared in a peculiarly awkward plight. Whereupon I said, "Perhaps, ma'am, you have got some account of your sister's life, or of her death there."

"No! no! merely a few lines," she replied, her cheeks reddening as she spoke.

In persevering to urge the subject on my friend, I soon perceived they were the author's first, and, notwithstanding Miss Dunn's allusions on that subject, to all appearance her last "attempt," there being that fondness, and yet that diffidence, connected with them, neither of which is common to the "old stager," who measures his verse by the mile, and sends his books into the world without cognisance of sensibility. I therefore felt the more

curious to obtain a copy of them; and I said that having excited my interest in the history of her sister, she would perhaps honour me with a perusal of what related so closely to it. To this, I, however, received a direct negative; but remembering what were my own feelings respecting the first verses I ever wrote—that I both wished, and was yet reluctant to submit them to the eye of another—I pressed my suit, and, pressing it, at last obtained a copy of the poetic effusion, though accompanied with such lengthened palliations and apologies as I would not willingly record, and, sooth, which I fear you would not willingly investigate.

This digression did not, however, prevent me returning to that part of Miss Millicent's history on which I wished to be yet more fully informed. But as at present I have not time to proceed further, I beg to send you a copy of the verses instead of other matter, which I do, not so much as a specimen of Miss Millicent's imaginative powers, as because I know you will find them descriptive of the death-bed scene of a dear departed sister, also known to you.

(The verses referred to are as follow.)

"MONTAGUE.

"What sacred awe my trembling spirit fills;
What heavenly rapture through my bosom thrills;
What mingled feelings melt this mortal frame,
At the lorn mention of that deathless name!

Oh! Montague, that thou hadst lived—nay, rather
That we had slept the sleep of death together!

Ye Seraphim, that hovered round her bed,
That smoothed the pillow to her aching head;
Ye angel band, that saw her faith and love,
Ere yet ye bore her to the world above;
Instruct my trembling pencil, while I paint
The Seraph's joy, to see a dying saint.
And Thou eternal spirit, as I trace,
The look of faith that settled on her face;
The hope, the joy that sparkled in her eye,
Teach me like favoured Montague to die.

Sweet one! ere youth had brightened up her eye,
Or care had swollen her bosom with a sigh;
Latent disease had checked the vital glow,
And loosed the cords that bound her soul below.
I heard her cough; I saw her often sigh,
And often caught the tear drop in her eye.
I listened oft to hear her nightly moan,
And often wished her sorrows all my own.
I saw her blooming beauty fade away,
And marked her eye grow hollow day by day;
I gazed, I wept, I loved, and half believed,
And fondly hoped my fears might be relieved.

At length the lingering winter disappeared;
Mild spring all animated nature cheered;
The genial sun prolonged the healthful day,
Even age revived beneath the enlivening ray.
I thought it could not be but Montague,
So young, so fair, would all her health renew—
A glow divinely sweet bespread her cheek,
Her downcast eye waxed radiant, sentient, meek;
Love's smiles upon her rosy lips were seen,
And sorrow fled her happy brow I ween.

Delusive beauty! born to mock the eye,
And like its sweet possessor soon to die.

Again her blooming cheek grew wan and pale,
And life's mysterious fountain seemed to fail.
——— ——— But oh! her faith was registered above,
Her faith which fired her soul with holy love;
Nor could her soul conceal the heavenly joy,
To tell of heaven was half her tongue's employ.
And oft her sister's hand she'd fondly press,
And oft salute it with a loving kiss;
And look, and weep, and feel a sister's care,
Then breathe her soul to heaven in ardent prayer;
Then tell of joys her happy soul possessed;
——— ——— Of her bright hopes of being with the blest.
Then, with a look of kind solicitude,
She'd point me to the dear Redeemer's blood,
And pray that all my sins might be forgiven.
Then, with her soul in holy anguish riven,
She sobb'd—'My sister!—O, to meet in heaven!'

Nor lacked the favoured saint sweet sights of bliss,
To soothe the pangs of nature's sore distress.
One even, when holy calm had filled her breast,
And sleep's sweet opiates called her soul to rest,
A heavenly vision met her wondering eye
(Blest prelude! that her latter end was nigh):
In the deep solitude of rayless night,
A form celestial burst upon her sight;
Effulgent glory darted from his face;
His eyes were love, his lips were stores of grace;
His flowing hair, like virgin snow, was white,
And darkness fled, affrighted at the sight;
Tidings divine employed his blessed tongue,
And thus to Montague he sweetly sung:—

'Hail, favoured saint—the well-beloved of heaven—
Thy prayers are heard, thy sins are all forgiven;
Thy name is registered among the blest,
And mansions wait thee in the land of rest;
Thy race is run, thy pains are at an end,
Ere thrice the sun the evening sky descend;
Those guardian angels, that thy soul attend,
Unseen, shall free it from its clay abode;
And bear it to the bosom of thy God.'
Thus spake the heavenly form, and soon retired,
Whilst Montague, with joys extatic fired,
Waked from her happy slumbers, nor believed
Such sights of bliss her fancy had conceived.

This world, blest Montague, no more could charm,
Death and the grave no more inspired alarm;
Her soul, on faith's exalting wings upborne,
Cast down to earth a look of holiest scorn,
Anticipated joys that angels prove
Fast by the fountain of eternal love.

—— Thrice orient morn had chased the gloom of night,
Since the blest image burst upon her sight,
And thrice the sun had reached meridian blaze,
Whilst dying Montague in heavenly lays
The song of her departure gladly sung—
O, the sweet melody of that dear tongue!
For still her soft harmonious numbers roll
With ever moving pathos o'er my soul.

Still was the breath of heaven; the setting sun
On the half-shaded lattice mildly shone;
And on her sister's heart engraved that face,
Which wasting time, nor change, shall e'er efface.
Oh, what a scene was that!—a scene of woe,
Which kindred souls at parting only know.

Then sorrow wrung a father's manly soul;
Then spurned a mother's anguish all controul;
Life's dearest joys forsook this trembling breast,
Then hopeless of a meeting 'mong the blest.
Now strove each heart its sobbing to subdue,
And every eye was fixed on Montague.
A heavenly sweetness all the chamber filled,
While thus her bosom's joy the saint revealed,
And as she spoke, kind heaven rebuked her pains,
And thrilled seraphic ardour through her veins.

'Oh! why,' she said, 'this anguish in your eyes?
Why flow these tears? why heave these bursting sighs?
Why wears each face this melancholy hue?
Is all this grief for dying Montague?
Weep not for me—these aching pains shall cease,
And this vexed soul shall enter into peace.
I've cast the anchor of my soul on God,
I've found an interest in atoning blood;
And, leaning on an arm divine to save,
I long to triumph o'er the vanquished grave—
To enter on the endless joys above,
And banquet ever on redeeming love.'

Thus spake the maid, nor saw the sun decline,
Then moved her features with a smile divine;
Then poured a flood of glory from her eye.
Then heaved her breast the last convulsive sigh;
And, sweet and silent as the breeze at even,
Her ransomed spirit winged its way to heaven."

LETTER XII.

MY DEAR ——,

HAD the criticisms contained in your last been on the poetry itself, and not on the author of it, I had passed them by in silence, though doubtless appreciating them like the rest of your kind correspondence. As, however, it is not only your opinion, but seems also to be a popular mistake, that the woman in whose soul dwells the power, or even the love of poetry, must necessarily be of a wild and romantic disposition, and eke an unthinking and undutiful housewife—as this seems to be a general supposition, I beg leave to differ from you, which I do on the assumption that poetry is nature—nature with its handmaid truth, and truth, which if any instance be raised to its fit sublimity, must be nevertheless at all times stamped with simplicity.

And in the study of human nature—in the patience necessary to reason and compare—in the process of dissecting emotion, and of exhibiting

truth, not only in its naked loveliness, but in its smallest minutia, as well as in its most gigantic form --in these, and the various other concomitants, without which *poetry cannot be*, there is, I ween, as little room for the wild and romantic, as—taking the terms in your acceptation—there is in the mind of him whose reflective powers may be said to be "without form, and void;" or even in the imagination of the student whose brain groans beneath the weight of abstruse science. It has, indeed, been remarked, and I think truly—"That he who has no regard for poetry, has very little for himself, or for any thing else." May I add, that *she* who has no regard for it, will oft-times be but a dull and undivining housewife; that nicety of calculation and comparison, and those perceptions, conceptions, and creations, which constitute the spirit of the muses, being, as I conceive, all very good things for the proper outfit of a good domestic economy.

I, however, in part agree with you, that religion is of itself too sublime to be elevated by human conceptions or creations. And, therefore it is, I suppose, that we so often complain of the dullness, or of the incompatibility of religious poetry in illuminating, or elevating, the subject it embraces. "Poetry," as has been observed, "must heighten, elevate, and throw an additional charm over every thing it touches. With religion it cannot do this. It cannot be made more sublime than it already is. Religion is the poetry of heaven! Farther, all

excellence is comparative; and the sacred writers have ascended to such lofty and bewildering heights —they have, if one may be allowed the expression, so revelled in the majesty of omnipotence, that the attempts of modern writers at rivalry would be like those of a bird competing a heaven-ward flight with a celestial spirit." But is the heaven-born soul, therefore. to be denied its native melody? Is it to return no echo of the song it loves, each note of the music of which is a divine emotion, each vibration a breathing breathed to heaven? And this emotion, this *action*, and echo of the heavenly soul, I conceive to be the spirit, or at least allied to the spirit of religious poetry, notwithstanding its inefficacy to raise the subject to its proper altitude.

The present communication is, however, only intended as a continuation of, or as a short postscript to my last; and without comment or preliminary, I beg to transfer myself back to my late interview with her whose verses have as unwittingly, as indirectly, called forth these remarks.

In the previous part of her history, Miss Millicent, in tacitly acknowledging her former independence, obviously did so from inadvertence. She seemed also to regret the recital of her poverty, into which she had been unintentionally betrayed. And, after having given me the copy of verses, and her emotion in speaking of her sister having in some measure subsided,—" Things will change, and let us change

the subject," she said, assuming an air of gaiety with which her heart bore no sympathy.

Alluding to her former humble lodging, to which reference chanced again to be made, I once more remarked that I was happy to see such a comfortable change.

To this, however, my auditor still withheld her acquiescence, and, after a pause, during which the colour came and went to her countenance,—"To be silent, sir," she at last replied, "or to give you an evasive answer, were again to act with that concealment which you have heard me repudiate. The apartment is indeed more comfortable of itself, but to me it is but more splendid misery—sorrow on a larger scale. In a humble lodging I was told that I could not expect respectable patronage, whether in teaching or in other occupations. In taking *this*, my expectation has been disappointed, and I leave it to-morrow. That to which I repair is one in which, for reasons I need not mention, I may not wish a repetition of your visits. Believe me, I have merely mentioned my intention, lest you had been led to suppose that truthfulness, or at least openness, forms no part of my character. And though my feelings of pride, which had rather concealed the circumstance from you, are strong, my hatred of concealment is yet stronger. Our religion," she added, "also requires consistency, and pray let these excuse what were otherwise officious information."

Miss Millicent, as I approached the door of her chamber on my first arrival, was singing a hymn, aiding it with the piano, and the music was the sweetest and most correct I had ever heard. As, therefore, she spoke of teaching, I said that if she were willing to teach music, there could be no difficulty in obtaining both employment and a handsome remuneration.

"It is all you know about it, sir," said she, looking incredulously at me.

I replied, that unacquainted as I was with these things, I could yet see that correct playing, as it is termed, is so much lauded and admired in the present day, that her musical attainments, I conceived, could not but be highly prized.

"Attainments in music, sir," she returned with great *sang froid*, "are never lauded, and seldom prized, when music has in any measure to become useful to the individual."

I asked what Miss Millicent meant.

"I mean, sir, that the individual no sooner begins to *teach* music, than the merit formerly ascribed to her is bartered for the remuneration she obtains; with music, in particular, commendation and emolument never being simultaneous."

"Why is it so?" I asked. But my informant smiled, and said it were better to put the question at head quarters.

Without disputing Miss Millicent's premises, I happily recollected of having heard Mrs. Dameson, a

clergyman's widow, with only one daughter, express her anxiety to obtain a religious governess; and though only acquainted with the lady in my professional capacity, I thought I could not do better than recommend Miss Millicent, especially as Mrs. Dameson herself made a religious profession. With this intimation, I begged Maria not to quit her present lodging until I at least made inquiry.

Attempting at the same time to inspire her mind with the privileges of religion,—"Acknowledge the Lord," said I, "in all thy ways, and he shall direct thy steps;" intimating also the comfort which this afforded in the most distressing situations of life, and the security afforded us by having the blessing of heaven on our side. But the exhorted, looking vacantly at me, asked,—"What I meant?"

"Is Miss Millicent's religion all a hoax, then?" my soul, in its surprise, secretly responded.

After a short pause, however,—"Since my heart knew any change," she added, "I have, sir, been in the constant habit of asking heaven's blessing and protection; but I do not know in what manner I am to expect the Lord to direct my steps in *these things*, or what peculiar allusion the passage has to poverty, and you will perhaps be so good as inform me?"

The enquiry was obviously made in simplicity of heart, and with a sincere wish of obtaining the information she asked. I nevertheless felt disconcerted; for, though the passage alluded to has in verity often been, and is still often urged upon the indigent Chris-

tian, and though I felt, withal, that to urge it is a very pleasant way of offering, if not of affording consolation, yet I did not myself see its peculiar bearing on the circumstances in question. Thus, whilst I was yet cogitating a reply,—"I had supposed," Miss Millicent furthermore added, "the revelations of the Bible as pertaining more to those things which we could not otherwise comprehend, than to the common affairs of life; and I had looked on the blessings which heaven vouchsafes as relating more to the things which we could not obtain from earth, or from man, than to natural things; but I may have been wrong, and you will perhaps instruct me on this subject, as well as how the text applies more peculiarly to the poor than to the rich?"

I confess that how to answer these things I wotted not, and I replied,—"Seek first the kingdom of heaven, and all other things shall be added unto you;" feeling certified that this at least was a passage often, and, as I conceived, appropriately urged on those whose circumstances are in a low estate.

Miss Millicent made no reply; but deep emotion, if not slight indignation, tinged her countenance, which seemed to say,—"Sir, though these words fell from the lips of infinity—from Him with whom one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day—they yet belong not to the monitions of man, *except* in so far as he would admonish *himself* by their heavenly bearing—not as a thing to be offered by one worm of humanity as a substitution for a fel-

low-worm's wants." And recollecting that many of God's dear saints, and some of His apostles too, had not experienced the literal fulfilment of this portion of sacred writ—recollecting also the late Miss Oliphant's hints, that he who has not himself experienced *want*, is untaught in the feelings of, and incapable of *prescribing* for the poor—recollecting these, I changed the subject, and returning to the more palpable species of relief, I again entreated Miss Millicent to keep her present lodging, on the certainty that the means of enabling her to do so, or of procuring a better one, should speedily be afforded.

Soft, I however perceived—soft had need be the heart that administers assistance to the noble-minded, and gentle the breath that offers it. Her lip quivered, her eye spoke, her heart also moved, but her tongue was inarticulate. And, as these are feelings which the sensitive love not to be noted, I took my leave—Adieu.

LETTER XIII.

My dear ——,

Mere professional acquaintance is but a slippery, and also a delicate path to friendship or favour. Though, in the excitement of the moment, I saw, or felt, no barrier in recommending Miss Millicent to Mrs. Dameson as a fit instructress for her daughter, nor, indeed, any obstacle betwixt that and the immediate instalment of Miss Millicent in the family in that capacity, I afterwards found that calmness, but especially coldness, finds obstacles where friendship and warmth find none, and that, in sooth, the practical part of life in all cases differs from the speculative.

Reflecting on the little intimacy existing betwixt Mrs. Dameson and myself, and the "favours" being doubtless on my side, I began to feel a delicacy in recommending my friend—unsolicited recommendation being, for the most part, looked upon as a tacit solicitation of favour. The obstacles referred to

were, however, soon overcome, for tracing the high-minded, and, let me add, noble-hearted, Maria Millicent stooping to seek, and yet not finding the employment she could so well perform—contemplating her associating with the rude, succumbing to the ignorant, and rebuffed by her inferior, and also forced to the lowly lodging, which, peradventure, she were yet unable to pay. Ruminating on these, and reflecting what must be Miss Millicent's feelings under them—"*I was a stranger and ye took me in,*" coming also to my remembrance, I resolved to allow no feeling of false delicacy, nor any difficulty on my part, to prevent my immediate mention of the subject to Mrs. Dameson.

From various remarks I chanced to make on some books which happened to be near me, I had found that Miss Millicent, though chary in showing her attainments, was well acquainted with French and German literature, being versed in the classics moreover.

In a matter of so much importance, and where the most unbiassed verity is so imperative, I, however, determined to permit no prepossession on my part to exaggerate any qualifications of Miss Millicent's. I accordingly told Mrs. Dameson that though of the lady's musical acquirements, and also of her acquaintance with the modern languages, I could speak with some assurance, I was yet ignorant of her more feminine accomplishments. But to my happiness, Mrs. Dameson replied, that the former

were the only branches about which she was solicitous; and on telling her of Miss Millicent's fervent piety, her satisfaction seemed to be crowned: not however, that she expressed any decided intention of engaging Maria. She asked what families the young lady had taught in. I said, I believed in none. Mrs. Dameson then asked by whom (besides myself) she could be recommeded. Replying that Miss Millicent was from the South of England, and that I believed she was partly a stranger here; my patroness immediately asked me on what account she had come to Scotland, or to the Scottish metropolis.

Intimating that, notwithstanding our friendship, Miss Millicent never informed me of that part of her history, I thereupon perceived that the circumstance of my being uninformed of the particulars alluded to, acted as a spell in exciting the inquisitive propensity of both mother and daughter.

"Do let us request a *personal* interview with Miss Millicent, mamma—and do you question her about all these things, whether we engage her or not. It will be so nice to hear what she has to say, especially if she don't like to tell," said Miss Dameson; the corresponding eagerness of the mother to be informed on those points on which I had intimated Miss Millicent's reserve, amounting, as I conceived, to a very vulgar feeling.

Innate dignity, however, happily represses intrusive interrogatory; and Mrs. Dameson, in an inter-

view with Maria herself, after putting several other enquiries in reference to her history, though still fain to enquire the cause of her leaving England, yet found it difficult to put the question, especially as the other's prompt replies to those already put, left no room for side innuendos.

"And pray, Miss Millicent, may I ask the cause of your leaving England, and coming to Edinburgh?" the lady, however, at last asked.

"I left England, expecting to find that happiness which I have not found, but the cause of which I cannot intrude on one who, whatever her kindness, is to me a stranger.

"Your disappointment has, perhaps, proceeded from your want of acquaintances here—or, perhaps, from some one having deceived you—or, perhaps, from want of caution on your own part—or, perhaps, from not having before been accustomed to a similar situation in life," Mrs. Dameson replied; adding each successive *peradventure* as she found the other passive to the former.

"Perhaps so," Miss Millicent at last responded.

"Or if you have a good home to go to, it is but natural to suppose you may wish to return to it."

"A very natural supposition; but, as I said before, I cannot intrude these things on a stranger."

Mrs. Dameson next enquired what pastoral testimonials Miss Millicent could have. Who referring the lady to the Rev. Dr. ——, of whose church she was a member, Mrs. Dameson felt more satisfied;

and after some other laudable investigation in reference to her qualifications, Miss Millicent, I am happy to say, entered upon the situation of governess.

With gratitude in her eye, she thanked me for having been the means of thus promoting her happiness. Nor were *my* feelings less ardent; and even Mrs. Dameson's chamber-maid, whose look I, however, do not like, and who I must have seen before, although I know not where, even she participates in the sympathy. I don't know what the girl means, but she seems to look on Maria and me as old acquaintances; and on conducting me to her mistress's sick-chamber, she is ever and anon taking the liberty of mentioning Miss Millicent's name; but doing it with so much good-nature, that I cannot think of repelling her freedom, being, moreover, always interested in hearing of one in whose welfare I feel concerned, and my personal communications with whom are now limited.

There will be, I doubt not, however, one offending link in the chain, arising from the position of the pupil, who being a "spoilt child," wishes to acquire every thing with learning nothing; and to be considered an "amiable young lady," without regard to those graces which are the distinctive feature of amiability.

"Mamma, I wish to learn Latin."

"Well, my sweet child, Miss Millicent can teach Latin."

"But, mamma, I don't *love* to learn the rudiments—learning which makes my *neck* ache—and is so fatiguing.

"No more you shall, darling, except one or two rules to please governess, and to begin with."

I am, however, happy to find that Miss Millicent is likely to make herself useful in sharpening the tone of the piety or the profession of Mrs. Dameson, who, if she has ever been turned from darkness to light, is, I should say, in the very lowest stage of Christian animation.

Alas! that they who have been made partakers of spiritual life, should thus allow it to languish in the lap of apathy—that they who have tasted the good word of God, and have been made partakers of the world to come, should, by their associations with the present world, bury their right and title to that beyond the skies—that having once seen the glories of Calvary, yea, and its sufferings, they should ever show in their intercourse with the world, that they care not for intercourse with Him, who cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah, glorious in His apparel, travelling in the greatness of His strength, speaking in righteousness, mighty to save!

It may seem a deviation from general sequence, to suppose that the children of eminently pious parents are, in many cases, more in danger of self-deception in matters of religion, than those reared at a greater distance from "the temple." But, notwithstanding the advantages of the former, there is with the lat-

ter the danger of counting on a parental proxy, or on a lineal descent of the principles of true piety; or, it may be, of forming a false or exaggerated estimate of their character, from the mere circumstance of having been kept from the temptations, from which the principles or the profession of their parents restrained them—thus calculating on negative virtue for a charter to the kingdom of heaven, or on the initiations of childhood for an experimental knowledge of the doctrines of the Bible. Akin to these, but, perhaps, in more grievous and more numerous instances, may be added the wife of the eminent Christian, more especially of the eminent Christian minister, who (if having formerly made a profession of religion) seems to take for granted, that wedding the man, she must needs have espoused his religion, or that it will be of as much use to her in the next world as in this. Looked up to, it may be, from her peculiar domestic position, she rests satisfied of being an equal partaker of the immunities of her husband's piety, as if the deference paid her on his account were recorded in heaven—alas! forgetting that the latter comes from man, and that the other must be derived from Him who looketh on the heart, and who judgeth righteous judgment.

With the husband, in such cases, it is to be feared that love too often covereth a multitude of sins, or that he is not conscientious. Reluctance to infringe on the loves of domestic life on the one hand, and the natural tendency to shut his eyes at the absence

of that piety which conscience tells him should have been an indispensable pre-requisite when he lifted his eyes to *choose* unto himself a wife, operating on the other to induce that passiveness which habit at last turns to apathy—turns to apathy whilst life and health and domestic smiles flow around him; but to another feeling shall it be turned, when he closes her eye in death, and the day of grace is past; or when he sits by his desolate hearth, unsolaced by the hope of ever again meeting the soul of her he loved, and with whom he buried all he thought he had on earth to love.

And yet earth, and earth's delights go far to blind the Christian—the Christian husband's eye; and the disparity of Christian principle is, perhaps, in many cases, reserved to be revealed at the day of judgment, when the awful and astounding fact is demonstrated before assembled worlds—that she who was the partner of his joys below, is now to be from him for ever separated.

An evil accompaniment of this state of things is, that few or none ever doubt, much less dispute, the spiritual safety of such characters. Thus, what with the force of habit, religious forms, the accredited opinion of others, and most of all, their own lulling of conscience, the individuals oft-times walk through the world, if not down to the grave, with a lie in their right hand.

I fear that to this class belongs Mrs. Dameson; her father's maintaining a blameless character as office-

bearer in the church for a long number of years, and her husband having been an eminent Christian pastor, ministering not a little to the self-deception; whilst what in her case may have tended the more to bury early religious impressions, a fuller cup than Mrs. Dameson had been accustomed to carry, was somewhat hastily put into her hand, by the large bequest of a distant relative.—And, lo! this world is a snare.

"Miss So-and-so is *rather* pious—Mrs. G. is a religious lady, but not very," were common modes in which she was wont to express herself to Miss M.; a third party being "*about to become religious.*" Miss Millicent listening to such conversations for some time, and mourning the unhappy tendency they were likely to have on the mind of her pupil, at last ventured to ask Mrs. Dameson, on what data she judged of a person being "about to become religious," and if she supposed the individual to have "passed from death unto life," when referring to being "rather religious, but not very."

In reference to the former, Mrs. Dameson replied, that the individual now abstained from many, if not all, her former worldly amusements, that she read good books, and was, withal, on the eve of joining a Christian church; the definition of Mrs. G.'s Christian character being more summary, namely, that the lady had many good and also many bad things about her.

Miss Millicent wished to notice to Mrs. Dameson, that religion is no dead letter; that it consists in life and living principles; that abstaining from worldly amusements, or indeed, from all that is worldly, does not, and cannot, constitute the POWER of godliness, without which, the individual's joining a Christian church is in most cases a bond which binds the sin of the "natural man" more closely to his heart; that with few exceptions, it is the stamp which seals formality upon his brow, deception upon his conscience, and eternal ruin upon his soul. In allusion to a person being rather religious, but not very, Miss Millicent also wished to explain, that though there may be different degrees of eminence in piety, that yet betwixt the *living* and the *dead*—the believer and the unbeliever, there is no connecting link; and that the individual alluded to was either a "new creature," and had come unto Mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, or, otherwise, was still in the "bond of iniquity."

Mrs. Dameson, though listening attentively, and seemingly impressed, yet, perhaps, from a consciousness that she could not herself lay claim to such a high calling and having yet a disinclination to believe that *she* was still in the gall of bitterness; from these feelings perhaps, more than from any other, was still inclined to believe that the individual might be a "very good person" without reference to these investigations.

The conversation was here, however, interrupted by Miss Dameson. "Speak about me—about my

learning, mamma; you never speak about it, of which I like best to hear you talk. I don't understand these things, mamma, and it makes my breast ache to hear you talk of them." *Miss*, I should note, has passed the beginning of her "teens." Yet on the most important of all subjects she considers ignorance in the light of gentility, and indifference, in that of young-ladyism.

But example is better than precept. A bright Christian character, reflecting its own lustre, is better than argument. The humble devoted walk of the Christian is the unseen irrigation spreading fertility where barrenness was. And Mrs. Dameson will, I trust, yet catch the fructifying influence, thus shed around her. Whilst with Miss Millicent, the *happiness* of making herself useful will, I doubt not, be a sovereign nepenthe under all that is unpleasant in her situation. But enough! I have written more than I intended, and more methinks than you have had good will to read.

LETTER XIV.

My dear —,

"If a man have an hundred sheep, and one of them stray into the wilderness, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and go and seek that which is lost?" And in this the children of this world are verily wiser than the children of light. How often are the members of the Christian church content with their *own* privileges, hugging themselves in the Christian intercourse of each other, their desires, or at least their efforts, bounded by those who "are already gathered;" though, lo! this their passiveness must, in the very nature of things, be discounted at the expense of their own spiritual life and enjoyment! Yet how often is this the case, and the "lost sheep" of the church-fold is left to wander on some Gilboa-mountain top, where no dew falls, or to stray in the wilderness where no heavenly light shines—allowed to wander unsought, unentreated, unremonstrated with, none heeding to bring him back to the shepherd and bishop of souls—none reflecting that

each lost soul is one gem fewer to the Redeemer's crown, and an awful amount of misery which the lost one must for ever endure.

With these reflections I waited on Emily Dunn, peradventure she might be brought into the right sheep-fold. But, alas! how often have the things of eternity to stand by, and give place to those of an evil world!

I had no sooner entered the room, than Miss Dunn, with great trepidation, and with apparent reluctance, put the following note into my hand:—

"My dear Emily,

"I am accused—I need not say of what: my heart and soul feel debased by the accusation, notwithstanding its falsity—And, O! the bitterness of submitting to vulgar inquisition, or of having those evils which are the reward of your own folly, showered upon your head in the eyes of those who 'deem derided pain a treat.' And yet the rebuke of the fool were little, and his laughter less; but when your goings cannot be established in the sight of the wise and the good, this—this is wormwood. To have the shot from the bow of the moral archer on the one side, and the 'crackling of thorns' on the other, is more than I can bear. In what light must my character appear in his eyes, whose kindness procured me this situation? When I think of this, I am tempted to flee into an unknown country, or to isolate myself entirely from my own species. Were it not, indeed,

that religion requires consistency in appearences as well as truth in the inward parts, I believe I should have quitted this place without even making you, Emily, acquainted with my goings. What adds to my affliction in reference to him whose goodness of heart was the means of placing me here, is, that I fear he will lose a good *paying*, because a whimsical and self-indulgent patient, as Mrs. Dameson doubtless is—and as she blames *him* also; yet if it should fare the worse with him on my account, I perhaps may be able to recompense his loss at some future day; and also to establish my steps in integrity before him. Yes! suspicious appearances, however slippery they may make your path, are yet easier trodden *under* than deeds of actual guilt. Perhaps, too, the desolate and forlorn may yet have friends—may yet have influence—and a HOME.

"Meanwhile, should I feel utterly unable to meet the eye of friend or acquaintance, and should therefore feel constrained to betake myself to seclusion, do you, my dear Emily, explain what you know, and testify what you can so well do, that I am guiltless of the charge brought against me; for even in the utmost homelessness and obscurity, the thought that one blot rested upon my character should make me feel yet more desolate, and yet more debased,

"I need not say that it is, as, from what I formerly told you, you must have anticipated, the servant girl who has brought this tribulation on my head;

and the weight of which is the greater, that nothing will pacify Mrs. Dameson but that I (forsooth!) should be confronted with Mrs. Black, who, as you know, I have never met since the memorable morning on which I left her lodging; and sooner than meet whom, I should be content to meet the lion in the desert; who, as you are aware, during the three weeks I was beneath her roof, never spoke to me but the blood stood still in my veins, and my heart became wedged in a casement of pointed steel. But independent of my repugnance at meeting such a person, the meeting were only to gratify a feeling alike vulgar and vindictive on the part of Mrs. Dameson. And, O! it is indeed hard when the ignorant and the low-minded are in power, when the petulent are indulged, and the vindictive hold the reins in their own hands.

"'Come, mamma! DO!' said the daughter, impatient for the warfare.

"'Hush, child!' returned the parent, who I, however, perceived, was the while 'nursing her wrath to keep it warm.'

"So you have been long acquainted with our physician, Miss Millicent?' she at last began.

"'I had a single interview with him several years ago, but never saw him again until lately.'

"'I, however, understand that he was a most attentive and solicitous friend of yours when you resided at Mrs. Black's, of E— street.'

"I said I had, indeed, lodged in Mrs. Black's house for three weeks; but that I believed Dr. —— had never visited the house until the morning after I had quitted it.

"'But, mamma! mamma! ask Miss Millicent about her coming from England—and about losing her gold watch—and about the gentleman who took it,' whispered *Miss.*

"'Patience, darling! patience!' the other returned; when I instantly replied that if Mrs. Dameson was presuming on the liberty of interrogating me to gratify a vulgar curiosity, whether on the part of herself or her daughter, I was sorry she had not informed me of her object sooner, as I most distinctly declined holding any compulsory communication on this, or on any other subject.

"'But, mamma, Governess *should* answer these questions,' the young lady now lisped.

"But why proceed further on a subject alike unpleasant for you to hear, and derogatory for me to relate? Mrs. Dameson waxing very wroth, immediately indulged in a low-bred raillery, and 'thrice she slew the slain;' the weapons of her warfare being also such as I considered no upright person was called upon to submit to; and walking out of the room, I said, I was sorry that her behaviour constrained me to retire; on which, like all those who have nothing but their wealth to prize themselves on, and who, indeed, prize nothing else, Mrs. Dameson straightway reminded me whose bread I was eating.

Conceiving that to reply, were to identify myself with such an argument, I merely bowed as I retired. But I shall not farther intrude such a strain upon you.

"The family are now retired to rest. It is impossible for me to say how we shall meet, or what I may do in the morning; or where to-morrow's eve may find me—No! my *home* is yet unknown .... Alas! Emily, alas! when the world goes well with us, how little do we know of the sufferings of 'Him who endured the contradiction of sinners against Himself!' And O how little knows he of the feelings that dictated that saying—'The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay His head!'—how little knows he of its meaning, who never needed to seek a home whilst houseless, or who in seeking it, was never denied his suit!

"Should I now leave Mrs. Dameson's, I shall, if possible, see you before taking any definite step; if, however, circumstances should preclude me this pleasure, I shall write you soon; till then I must bid you farewell. See that ye vindicate my character to Dr. ——, my friend, or at least my benefactor.

"Yours, most truly,

"MARIA."

It was in vain that I sought more information on the subject from Miss Dunn, who I had never found in a more incommunicative mood; her answers,

which, on former times, were all but synonymous to a history, were now couched in monosyllables. Recollecting the primary object of my visit, however, I changed the subject, and introduced that on which Miss Dunn was wont to speak in the abundance of her heart, notwithstanding the incorrectness of her views, or the inertness of her conduct.

"I hope," said I, "you are not still 'waiting,' or intending to 'wait' longer at the 'pool of ordinances;'" urging also that had her late companion, Miss Oliphant, been found *waiting*, instead of *believing*—rejecting, instead of enjoying, the bright hope of a kingdom of glory, she, instead of having a comforter and guide in the valley and shadow of death, had felt her feet to stumble on the dark mountains, and the prospect of a darker hereafter had been before her.

Miss Dunn was, however, as reserved on this as on the subject of her companion's difficulties.

"'Tis all true you say, sir," she at last replied to some statement I had made; "but at present I cannot attend to it; *to-day* my mind is otherwise filled."

I was the more disconcerted at this acknowledgment, as, notwithstanding the deep mental concern in which it was apparently made, the speaker forthwith directed her attention with peculiar interest to the cheering of a few boys at some passing pageantry on the street. Going to the window myself, and seeing a chaise driver with a piece of white ribbon

on front of his jacket, "'Tis a marriage," I said, expressing myself with all the indifference I felt, which, however, inspired my auditor with no neutral feelings in the hymeneal rite.

On retiring from the window, she still evaded the few remarks I attempted to make in reference to her soul; yet from the colour that came and went to her countenance, I saw it was some deep emotion, and not indifference, that caused this change of deportment. And conceiving that though religion may be urged, it cannot be forced upon the individual, I rose to take my leave.

"Excuse me, sir," she said, "and do, if you can, forgive all the trouble I have given you, in explaining to me what I not only already knew, but what in God's word I saw to have been made legible by a hand that was divine—forgive, if you can, sir, the time I have allowed you to spend in urging upon me what I knew my heart, the while, could not admit; for, O! sir, there was an Achan in the camp; though who, or what that Achan was, I may not tell to mortal.—Sir, I deceived you, and I deceived myself."

I said there was One whom she could not deceive; and beseeching her to remember this, I was again in the act of retiring.

"You are leaving me, sir, and I fear God will now leave me too!" she pursued with more emotion than she had hitherto manifested.

"These are awful words," I replied—"to say that God will leave you, when He is at this moment stretching out His arms to receive you, and when the Son of God is at this moment ready to intercede for you."

"They are awful words," she responded.

But such seemed the struggling of her emotions, that words seemed lost in the tumult; and such was the nature of my engagements, that I felt, constrained to leave.

Such also is *now* the nature of these, that I must bid you adieu.

LETTER XV.

My dear ——,

Who shall put the question, "What is in a name?" or who is so unacquainted with the works and imaginations of man, as that he shall accredit each designation with the thing which it denotes?

Unlikely as it may appear, in few cases are we more apt to use false terms than in those pertaining to iniquity, especially where we can divert the conscience by substituting what we are pleased to consider a lighter sin, instead of a more serious one; or where some peculiar species of iniquity can possibly be decked in another robe than its *own* respective garment; and despite the same heinousness of the adscetious robe, or of the different name we thus give to it, there is, nevertheless, something soothing to the breast—something which, in whatever way, tends to lull conscience in thus changing the particular vesture, or the proper designation of any given iniquity. In covering apathy, for instance, with unbelief—unbelief with the shades of mock hu-

mility; or, indeed, the indulgence of any particular sin with that of a different species. Albeit is this, perhaps, the most frequent—that passiveness and apathy go by the name of want of assurance—the want of assurance being at the same time decked in robes of voluntary humility. Our more peculiar tendency to commit fraud, so to speak on this particular sin, is, it is to be feared, from its frequent alliance with some known sinful indulgence, in the damps of which living faith cannot vegetate. Thus, though the absence of confidence is in most, if not in all cases, the child of spiritual lethargy, or of more active impiety, with which the vital principles of religion hold no common ground, and offer no interchange of immunities; yet such is the exceeding sinfulness of sin—such the deceitfulness of the human breast—that we seek to soothe conscience by the transmutations of sin, or to soften guilt by adopting a new nomenclature, even for its aggravations; the new Adoption being still cognisant of that sin, which, of all others, must be peculiarly aggravating in His sight, every page of whose word, not only abounds with the strongest grounds of faith, but who hath also established faith as the bond of His covenant.

Negative confidence is at the same time urged, as if apathy or indifference were not accounted disobedience, or as if distrust were not accounted sin—as if He who hath taken faithfulness as the girdle of His reins, and righteousness as the girdle of His

loins, can *possibly* perform less than He hath promised, or be satisfied with less than He hath demanded—demanded or accepted a surety for, whilst for distrust He hath accepted none.

What else, indeed, my dear ——, but faith as the ground-work of redemption, could have embued religion with its wondrous adaptation to the wants of fallen man? Does the soul, feeling its separation from God, look back with mournful regret on the day when from Paradise "He drove out the man?" —Faith fills the soul with Deity. Does it, even with "this enjoyment of God," still thirst for something which this world cannot give, or which, in this sinful state, cannot be fully enjoyed?—Faith looks beyond the skies. Is the worm of the dust, conscious of his nothingness, his helplessness, and his insufficiency, ready to sink into the earth whence he came? —Faith realizes Omnipotence overshadowing him, and the Rock of Ages as an everlasting stay. Does the child of sin, notwithstanding this, feel his impurity—his want of that which should fit it for associating with purer and immortal beings in the land of love?—Faith purifieth the heart, and worketh by love. Above all, does humanity shrink from the grasp of dissolution, and recoil at thoughts of death and the grave?—

"FAITH is the bright triumphal arch
Through which the saints to glory march."

But I stray from the subject—excuse me. I have been led to it, seeing, that notwithstanding the

adaptedness of faith to our wants, we yet treat it as a grace more easily to be dispensed with than any other. And notwithstanding the aggravation of the want of it in the sight of God, we yet call other sins by a name denoting its absence, in doing which we even hug ourselves in the belief that this is palliation and humility.

An example of this kind I have found in Emily Dunn. Numerous, as I have already recorded, were the instances in which she had pleaded and mourned her inability to believe, yet was it not until surprised into it by other overpowering emotions that she acknowledged there was an Achan in the camp—a lodgement in her heart, beside which faith could erect no dwelling-place.

Visiting the unbelieving one on the morning after the interview already related, "I was sorry," I said, "to see you subject to such strivings of heart yesterday, and apparently with less striving to enter at the strait gate than I had before witnessed."

"You must have thought my conduct very strange, sir; but had you known all, you had been kind enough to have excused it."

"Merely to excuse grief is but a mean mark of kindness," I replied; "for if the emotion proceeded from real and deep affliction, it ought to have our sympathy; and if from sinful, or even from imagined causes, it ought to have our warning or our counsel."

Though less prone to such a resource than her sex generally, the only reply I received to this was a

flood of tears; and which I the rather mention, that, notwithstanding the painful nature of some of Miss Dunn's former detail, I had never before seen the speaker weep.

"If my sins and my sorrows had been of the same nature as those of others, I had long ere this repented," she at last answered; "but, sir, my heart is filled with *other* grief, and I have no room for godly sorrow."

"My friend," I said, "the natural heart is at all times, and in every individual, at enmity with God. Each soul also knows its own sorrow. But were there no self-denial to make, there could be no room for taking up our cross and following Jesus; nor were there any room for the gracious, as well as glorious stipulation—'Whosoever loseth his life for my sake shall receive it an hundred-fold.'"

"Sir, I had overcome the pleasures of the world, had these strewed my path; but its sorrows, and my own scorn and shame—these are what I cannot overcome."

I replied that notwithstanding the more prevalent belief, that the days of shame or sorrow are more favourable to religion than those of pleasure and prosperity, I was myself of opinion that the former were more apt to crush heavenly aspirations beneath their weight than even the latter were to bury them in the abundance of their joys. "But this," I said, "is mere human speculation. All—all can alike be brought into subjection by Him at

whose breath the 'dry bones live,' and Zerubbabel becomes a plain."

"Yes, sir, if I but experienced the power and the operations of the Holy Spirit."

"Religion," I answered, "is supported by no charm, but by the truth; whilst imploring the aid or agency of the Spirit, we must ourselves attempt all, as if He were to perform nothing." I also intimated to Miss Dunn that from several hints she had let slip, both on the yesterday, and the present occasion, I was afraid she had all along been attempting to serve two masters, which was the true cause of her shortcomings in religious attainment." And I at last learned that in the indomitableness of woman's love, or woman's fatuity. she had still cherished secret lingerings after him who had so ruinously enticed, and so cruelly spurned, her affections; especially from some particular period, when he had renewed his pretensions of kindness, and from which time her heart, she said, had "*declined.*" The marriage referred to in my last was that of the individual in question; and it was this that betrayed Miss Dunn into an acknowledgement of the feelings of sorrow and shame now alluded to.

"These are the things, sir, of which I *cannot* divest my mind. Were it any worldly pleasure, or any other worldly sorrow—I could overcome *these,*" she again urged.

"My dear friend," I replied, "where the Son is there is light; but until this light is admitted, the

prince or the spirit of darkness has—and keeps—possession of the soul. It is because you have not admitted this Spirit of light—because the stronger man hath not yet entered, that the other still keeps possession."

"I believe it, sir; but this prince of darkness is too strong for me to thrust out."

"Yes," I said, "but admit the stronger man, and He will of Himself thrust the other out."

"How shall I?" was the enquiry.

"With bleeding love in your eye, with the record that that love was for you—even you, in your hand, open your heart to Him who says, 'Behold I stand at the door and knock.'"

My auditor now listened with what appeared to be the tear of love in her eye; and knowing that the secret chamber is best fitted for the melting soul, I retired.

But I must now bid you adieu.

P. S.—I *un*fold my sheet to add a supplement, instead of troubling you with another letter by to-morrow's post, which I should otherwise feel inclined to do.

On leaving Miss Dunn's, I bethought me that we are "dust" as well as spirit, and that however much more important the latter, the other must also be attended to. I therefore thought it time to make enquiry into Miss Millicent's grievances; and going direct to the house of Mrs. Dameson, I entered it

with dubious steps, from my own peculiar position, as well as from Miss Millicent's.

But whether it was that the volcano had already exploded, or that the lady had particular reasons for wishing Miss M.'s return, I do not know. She, however, began upon the usual key, namely, her physical complaints; each of which, she said, after giving me their varied detail, had been aggravated by a slight altercation with "governess," and in which she wished my interference.

I asked,—"In what?"

"Merely to give Millicent some explanations on some subjects on which I may have expressed myself warmly, and to induce 'governess' to explain herself to me in return."

I said, I conceived those things could be best done by ladies themselves, we being not only novices in such matters in comparison to them, but that one of our sex, I surmised, would be utterly incapable of pleasing both parties. And it was only now that I was made to understand that Miss Millicent had left her situation, and that Mrs. Dameson supposed not but that I was aware of her retreat.

I said, I had imagined Miss Millicent had had more respect for her Christian principles, not to speak of collateral circumstances, than to have broken her engagement without mutual consent.

"I was heated, Doctor. You know that I am sensitive. I may have given Millicent liberty—I may, indeed, have recommended her to leave me."

"But 'governess' was always telling me of the duty and the virtue of humility; and Miss Millicent should have submitted to 'Ma,'" Miss Dameson hereupon lisped in peevish accents, and which I the rather condescended to answer, the daughter's remarks having met a smile of acquiescence from the parent.

True humility, I said, by no means consisted in servile submission; and that however becoming in all, it was yet a virtue which those in power were more peculiarly called upon to exercise, than were those on whom the power is exercised.

"But, 'Ma, ought not all poor people to be humble?" *Miss* still pursued.

"Yes, dear, yes; but so ought *we*, you know," the parent lovingly replied. And, being myself in no mood for ethics, I said that I was not aware that Miss Millicent was really poor, and that I should not be surprised if——

"O! but sir, we know all about it," the lady here interrupted; "and the gentleman who brought Miss Millicent from England stole all she had, and advertised her in the newspapers, and went himself to India, and chambermaid told us all about it, and she lived with Mrs. Black, of E—— Street, at the time."

Being in no propensity to listen to such talk, I hastily took my leave, asking myself to what asylum Maria Millicent could have betaken herself. Being also forcibly reminded of the desolateness

of that feeling which had given birth to her remark, in allusion to Him who had not where to lay His head. And now, that "tir'd nature" reminds me of my *own* pillow, let me bless God for all His mercies towards me—I say *good night*, though the morning watches are past.

LETTER XVI.

My dear ——,

Whosoever he was, or if indeed there ever existed the man who could "travel from Dan to Beer-sheba, and say 'tis all barren," his profession, or occupation, must needs have been different from that of the humble scribe who now writes.

On the morning after penning my last letter to you, I went abroad as usual. I had, however, only made one "call," when a gentleman dashed past me, his fiery steed firing the flints with the fierce dashing of his hoof.

"A noble animal!" said one passer-by. "And a noble rider!" responded another. But hardly were the words uttered, when the horseman and his charger were laid prostrate on the street. The "police" was instantly at hand. No public institution, or public inn, being near, the wounded man was carried to an adjoining house, on the front of which "Private Lodgings" were conspicously announced. Medical aid being called for, and the case seeming to be

one admitting of little time to lose, I instantly proffered my services. Besides other serious injuries, there was a fracture in the skull, and the patient was insensible.

I, however, recognized in him the person of Mr. Baynes, although he did not seem to know me, either then, or a few hours afterwards, when paying him a second visit; but next morning, looking me steadfastly in the face,—"Mr. Baynes," I said, "I see you recollect me. Our former meeting was a painful one; I should be glad to think that this may end more happily."

"That will perhaps depend on *where* we *separate* for," he answered. To which, making no reply, for I hardly knew what to say,—"And the '*where*' is, I fear, uncertain," he added, with peculiar expression and emotion, though without that deep feeling which overcharged itself in mental vacuum during Miss Oliphant's illness.

"It is good to hope the best, and be prepared for the worst," I stammered, recollecting to have heard the remark made by some one.

"Ah, sir!" he replied, "words are, in themselves, small things; but to him who feels that his fate is in their meaning, they are great mountains."

"They are," I said; "and but that our salvation cometh from Him who is the Omnipotent One, we must feel ourselves buried beneath them——

"Yes, sir," the other interrupted, "and to him, who without *hope*, feels his thread of life dangling over

the brink of eternity; they are mountains of burning coals. Not—not to him as to Anna Oliphant, was each word relating to futurity, to whom each syllable that spoke of another world was as hills and mountains of joy and delectation."

"Infinite mercy, and infinite power, are indeed our only refuge," I replied; and the sick man listened with peculiar attention to this, and a few other remarks. But his eye, ere long, assuming that obliviousness which characterised it during Miss Oliphant's illness,—"Ha! man," he said, "there was as much in one sentence that *she* uttered last night and this morning, as in all your long words and theological terms put together."

What "*she?*" I asked.

"Her angel—Anna Oliphant's angel—the tall one —she who warned me of my danger, when I sat by Anna's death bed. She found me out on this bed of suffering; and, ah! her words were sweet as the murmurs of my native river, for they reminded me of the days when I walked its banks with Anna —they told me of the happiness of Anna's glorified spirit, and also of the glory of One whom she termed Anna's Lord.

I did not at first know whether my patient was delirious, or not. I was alike anxious to know whether he had had some such visitant; or, if he had, if the conversation had left any serious impression; and, though perceiving that all excitement

must be hurtful, I nevertheless asked what kind of visitant he had had.

"O, just as if you don't know, and as if you did not send her, or as if there was not a secret compact betwixt all you *holy people,* whereby each speaks the same speech; only *she* speaks it plainer, and with more love than you, that's *one* thing.—But Spanker! —If his knees are broken, he's DONE, that's certain. Hostler, my horse!—Hostler, saddle Spanker—Hostler——"

"Hush! my dear sir, hush!" I said, laying my cold hand on his brow.

"O, that won't do, Doctor! I know what you want," he replied in sagacious accents; "that is the way *she* brings me to it; but *your* hand is not so soft as hers—your lips want the melody, and your words want the power of hers; for HERS breathe sweetly as the breeze of the mountain—the mountain I climbed with ANNA—Anna, my love! Anna! Let me go to heaven with you."

Seeing delirium increase so rapidly, I prescribed the usual remedies, and enjoined the greatest quiet to be observed.

It was late in the evening ere I was able to repeat my visit, and stepping noiselessly into the room, I was happy to hear my patient speaking more coolly and more collectedly, listening also to the voice of her who seemed to be his favourite visitant. That voice was Maria's.

"Miss Millicent," I said, proffering my hand.

"Dr, ——," she faintly responded, putting her hand timidly forth, and thenceforth was in the act of retiring; but, detaining her, I said that I should be happy to be favoured with a few minutes' conversation, after having prescribed for Mr. Baynes.

"It is late to-night, sir, and I am sorry I cannot ask you into my room. To-morrow I shall be happy to see you."

We bade each other good night.

"This, then, is the visitant you alluded to," I said, addressing the sick man. "I am happy it is one who was not only well acquainted with Anna Oliphant's faith and piety, but who is herself well acquainted with Him who was, and who still is, Anna Oliphant's Lord."

"She is what you say, sir. I love the subject on which she speaks, and I love to hear her words; but I have no life to give them root, and when she ceases to speak, they die, or are buried in some mass of iniquity in which I feel they cannot vegetate.

"That," I said, "is because, as I fear, you have not yet come to the blood of sprinkling—you have not fixed your eye on Him who hath said, 'The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.'"

"I cannot do all *that*," Mr. Baynes impatiently replied; "but if religion could make me as happy as it made Anna Oliphant, or if it is as lovely as Miss Millicent represents it to be, I were then willing to adopt it."

"'Eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, nor hath the heart of man conceived the things which God hath laid up for them that love him,'" I answered; "and believe me, that with all Miss Millicent's eloquence, the half hath not been told. Dive, yourself, into this ocean of bliss, and you will find it so."

"But, sir, my heart is harder, less lovely, and less susceptible of love—the love of heaven—than is *hers*, or than was Anna Oliphant's."

"My dear sir," I said, "the breath of the Eternal can soften the hardest heart, and the robe of the Redeemer's righteousness can make the most polluted lovely."

It seemed, however, in vain that I told my friend that they were the primary principles of the Truth to which I referred, and to "*adopt* religion" without submitting to which, was an impossibility. But fearing to re-induce excitemeat, I dropt the subject.

The hour was late ere I reached my home. On reaching my chamber, nature was exhausted, but my meditations were no wise given to repose; and, feeling that "nature's sweet restorer" could have no place in such a wandering imagination, I sat me down and recorded the foregoing incidents; wherefore, if nothing worthy of narration transpire to-morrow, I shall send you this as it is, though coming short of the usual length of our correspondence.

My dear ——. Twenty-four hours more have been added to my span since penning the above. On my visit to Mr. Baynes this morning, I was

happy to find him going on well, though I cannot say he is yet out of danger.

I asked if he had had a visit of Miss Millicent this morning.

"No sir: the 'saints,' I find, are regulated by peculiar laws. They break through all conventional customs when to dry the damps of death, or to admonish the soul relative to its entering another world. Miss Millicent bathed my brow when she thought I was going to the grave, and could make her no return, Now that she thinks the power of remuneration may still be mine, and that the gloom of the grave has in some measure departed, the lady has, I suppose, withdrawn her visits."

"The former," I said, "might be, but the latter was not characteristic of the saint—thus early to withdraw her visitations, whilst so much of heaven remained to be told, and in his case, I feared, so much of the way of getting to heaven."

"Maria Millicent not a saint, sir! Yes, and now that Anna Oliphant is in heaven, the other is the loveliest saint on earth."

"Be composed, my dear sir," I replied; "you can have learnt no lesson of violence or impatience from any saint that is lovely, much less from that saint's discourse of Him who was meek and lowly; and it will be of small account to us merely to appreciate, without personally appropriating what leads to a lovely life and conversation."

"O yes! that is just what *she* tells me. You all speak with the same tongue. But on hers there is the dew of love and goodness which quenches my spirit whilst it is yet rising," he mournfully rejoined. And seeing my patient much exhausted, I urged quiet.

On asking for Miss Millicent, I was shewn into a small and scantily furnished room.........Poverty, what an iron hand is thine! how thou breakest down the most self-independent—and bowest down even the mind of him who has an interest in a kingdom that cannot be moved! Such was its operation on Miss Millicent, as I entered the apartment; the meanness of each article of furniture being in a moment gathered to her face. Howbeit, were there few articles to conspire in this invasion of the feelings—the whole consisting of three chairs, a small table, and a piece of furniture, purporting to be a chest of drawers elevated by the formation of a desk, but which, I opined, instead of affording the convenience of an escritoir, indued the room as a sleeping, as well as a sitting chamber.

I told the inmate of having seen Mrs. Dameson, and of the lady's wish for her to return.

But that, Maria said, could not be, as even to sit in company with a person who had used such language as had Mrs. Dameson, was incompatible with all moral dignity, not to speak of the feelings of humanity.

"My good lady," I said, "we have bodies as well as spirits; and whilst flesh and blood have to be provided for, we must often *separate* these from the higher feelings of our nature—we must in some instances submit to those animal-individuals, who having neither soul nor high feelings themselves, know not that they can wound those of others."

"Your argument may be good, sir; but there is a point in debasement to which the upright *cannot* stoop, and in the foulness of the atmosphere of which moral dignity would be constrained to die." Miss Millicent also informed me of having written to a friend at a distance; that she partly expected a reply, which might be here in the course of two days; and until that time she would, she said, make no positive arrangement for the future. With this understanding, I reluctantly took my leave; which I now also take of you.

LETTER XVII.

My dear ——,

Disappointment is the sure lot of humanity, and the greater the exigency connected with our expectation, the more likely are we to be disappointed. Miss Millicent's all seemed to rest upon the letter she expected two days after the interview previously related. Post after post, however, arrived, and no tidings came to the anxious expectant. Here, on the other hand, I have had a letter from Maria, when I had rather received none—or none until I had once more seen the writer. I, however, enclose it to you; but that you may the more fully comprehend the several allusions it contains, it is necessary that I give you a few particulars of the lady's early history, which I had from her own lips; and which, in her case, I may premise, entirely invalidates my hints afore-time offered, on the impropriety of placing one's affections on a person whose descent, or parentage, is unknown.

Miss Millicent, it seems, with an only sister, constituted the entire family of a wealthy country gentleman in the south of England. The wildness of their rural seclusion appears, of itself, to have been sufficient to call forth that boldness and activity of character which so characterize Miss Millicent; whilst the grandeur of much of the scenery which she described to me must have largely expanded her faculties of wonder and admiration; and, perchance, also more fully developed that romantic turn of mind, of which she perhaps had a small share.

To an education the most liberal, were added the conversation and counsels of a mother whose mind was as fanciful as her own. And as if to add the romance of the town to that of the country, the family spent two months of each winter in London, almost every evening of which was devoted to the theatre or the opera. What happiness earth could confer was, indeed, Maria's. Yet, albeit, happy in the enjoyment of this, her ardent soul, though not knowing what, still panted after something more commensurate with immortality. The endearments of social life, with the long unbroken friendship and affection of the family, had, at the same time, well nigh established the feeling that this world is our rest.

But in the height of domestic sunshine, a cloud began to lower. Her sister, the beloved of Maria's soul, and the chosen companion of her studies and amusements, began to look as mortals seldom look

when life's lease has long to run. Celestial wisdom, though how or when it first visited her none knew, beamed more and more brightly on her brow; her eye, though subdued by sickness, yet glistened with a fire that found its fuel in the brightness of immortal joy; her cheek became flushed with fresh beauty, but it was "the rose whose root is death." It was almost the first time that sickness had entered the family circle; and Maria, with her feelings ardent, and her soul all unsubdued, could hardly bring her mind to the possibility of disease, much less of death, invading their long course of health and enjoyment. Submission, she said, she never aimed at; and when her sister, who even at this early stage of her illness, seemed to have revelations not sent from man, told her, that unless meeting in a happier world, the sweet remembrances of childhood and the stronger ties of affection's maturer years, must be for ever severed; Maria still believed it not, or cast it from her—the thought of such an affliction being, as she conceived, too vast for her powers of submission.

"One day in particular," said Maria, "when my dear sister was seated in the bower in the garden, and stepping gaily into it, I seemed to take her by surprise; 'All alone, Montague!' I began; 'I thought I could not have thus intruded when you were so.'

"'I am not alone, Maria,' she replied.

"'So I perceive; but a book is a dry companion,'

I said, casting my eye over the volume that lay by her side.

"'Ah! Maria,' she answered, 'I meant not my book; but if you will sit down, I will tell you my meaning. Do you not know, Maria, that the angel of the Lord encamps about His people?'

"'Do not speak so, Montague, for it makes my mind dark and melancholy,' I replied, interrupting my sister.

"'My dear Maria,' she returned, 'that is because you know not the source of the Christian's joy. The man of the world may, indeed, find 'blackness and darkness' in his associations of heaven; not so the man who has come to Mount Zion—unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels.—O not so him, Maria!—not so him who has come to Jesus, the mediator of the new covenant, whereby he experiences the 'blessedness of the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not sin.' Maria,' she added, my time is short. I leave you in a world which you will find lonely when friendship's ties are broken. But come ye to this Mount Zion, and, as said the Saviour to His disciples, 'I will see you again, and our hearts shall rejoice;' and we shall reign with HIM.'

'As my sister thus spoke,' said Miss Millicent, 'celestial fire glowed upon her countenance, something so unlike what belongs to earth, that I at last began to fear what she said in reference to her com-

ing dissolution was too true; as well as to attach more importance to what referred to myself.

"'I am much mistaken, Montague,' said I, 'if religion can afford me the same happiness as do the pleasures and amusements of the world; but I am, nevertheless, willing to make some sacrifice; as I should at least prefer the Christian's security.'

"'You are not mistaken, so far, Maria,' my sister pursued; 'the man of the world has indeed far more pleasure in the things of the world, than he could possibly have in religion; because it is the 'power,' not the 'form' of godliness, which yields peace and joy—it is the transforming influence of religion—it is, O Maria! it is the indwelling of the spirit of the living God.'

"'This inhabitation of the spirit,' I said, 'must indeed exalt the nature of man, and, rendering him more allied to Deity, must therefore confer more than earthly happiness.'

"'Yea, verily,' my sister returned; 'but it is this spirit's taking of the things of Jesus, and shewing them unto the soul, which gives that eye of faith, without which the individual could not look up to the place where Deity dwells, nor without which could his body be a temple for the spirit of the Lord to dwell in; and it is this which is the basis of his most exalted joy; for, O! glorious in His apparel, travelling in the greatness of His strength, the fairest among ten thousand, and altogether lovely, is He of whom this spirit ministers.'

" Looking earnestly at me,—'Maria, do you believe these things?' Montague asked.

"'I think I do,' I answered; 'and I also fancy that I should love religion, could I always hear you talk of it.'

"'Would to God I might live until I saw my sister's feet set upon a sure place,' said my dear Montague, the tears running from her eyes, to hide which, she stooped to pluck a flower from the woodbine that laced the bower. In stooping, the girdle of life gave way. A blood-vessel had burst, and she was carried into the house. She was carried into the house," continued Maria, " and she left it not until carried out upon the bier."

Montague Millicent's death is, however, so truthfully delineated in the verses I sent you, that I need not trouble you with a further recital.

Maria mourned, and deeply mourned, for her sister. She yet attended not to that sister's admonitions; and her affections now cleaving more than ever to the society of her beloved mother, her eye, in time, began to look up.

But " woes cluster (rare are solitary woes)". So it happened to Miss Millicent. She had not been long sisterless, when it pleased God to remove her mother also.

Several years passed on. Maria was the mistress of her father's house, and the chief object of his affection. Love was mutual; but at a time when the daughter counted on her only surviving parent's

love as all her own, he became enamoured of one of his maid-servants. This was first evinced to the daughter by her father becoming more indifferent of her society, as well as by the servant in question taking liberties with her mistress, not hitherto presumed upon. Mr. Millicent at last informed his daughter in plain terms of his purpose of marrying, and to whom.

Love to her mother's memory, and wounded pride, with other contending passions, all but overwhelmed the daughter, her every feeling being soon embittered by the imperious manner in which the new-made *lady* treated her, so soon as becoming mistress of the house; whilst, as it not unfrequently happens, the coarser the mind, and the lower the origin of a wife in such circumstances, the more sway does she usurp over her husband, whether in monopolizing his entire affections, or in withdrawing them from the offspring of the wife of his youth.

Maria's spirit, unbent as it had been by any affliction coming from the hand of man, was not that to succumb patiently to the ignorance and uncourteousness of her mother-in-law; and, going to London on a visit, the first offer of marriage was the more readily listened to. This was from a gentleman holding a commission in the —th regiment, who persuaded her to accompany him to Scotland, and there to have their nuptials celebrated in the society of his friends. No sooner had they arrived in Edinburgh, however, than the gentleman's former

impatience was turned to procrastination, and ambiguous hints, instead of direct arrangements for marriage, were at last thrown out. Scorning which, and knowing she had now forfeited all her father's remaining favour, Miss Millicent knew not what to do. In this plight, the gentleman took Maria to the lodgings of Mrs. Black, where he ultimately left her, without leaving any trace of whither he had betaken himself, supposed also to have taken with him her purse and her watch.

It was on discovering her homeless and miserable situation that the forlorn one wrote to her father, imploring his forgiveness for having so precipitately listened to a partial stranger, and asking a remittance to enable her to retrace her steps. But the parent, now governed and biassed by his low-minded wife, wrote back, disclaiming all future acknowledgment of his daughter.

The evening on which I first met Miss Millicent was that on which she received this letter; and it was on that evening that Mrs. Black, finding she was not to be remunerated according to her expectation, had urged her abroad with the basest injunctions.

I immediately replied, that if the individual who had acted such a treacherous part were in the army, he could easily be found; and that, for the interests of society, such persons ought to be exposed. But to this, Maria informed me she had good reason to believe that he had quitted the service.

I said, "Might I ask the name by which he was known to her?"

"Alfred Ethrington."

Recollecting that the initials of which answered to the letters in the advertisement formerly referred to, I mentioned this to Miss Millicent, and also the probability of the gentleman being still in Edinburgh, and that the object of the advertisement was that of marriage.

My auditor was at first much fluttered; but at last, assuming her natural promptitude and firmness, —"I loved him once," she said, "and love is slow to depart from woman's heart; but aside from those hostile feelings which his conduct in some measure stamped upon my affections, I now bear the armorials of another Lord and King; and bearing such, I could not espouse myself with one upholding the banners of an opposing service."

Miss Millicent also informing me of having often and again written to her father since the period referred to, but of having received no answer, I asked permission to write him myself; and it was when proceeding to do so that I received the accompanying note, enclosing which, I add no more.

The subjoined is the note referred to:—

"My dear Christian friend,

"I want words, and words want meaning, to tell my obligations to you, and which I now feel to lay the

heavier upon me, that I perchance may never see you again, to express my feelings with even that inadequateness with which words must ever express them.

"On perusing a London newspaper, I have this morning seen the death of the wife of my beloved father, which event seems to have taken place three weeks ago. Whatever were my father's feelings towards the deceased, whether strong or less ardent, I know her death must have caused to bleed afresh those wounds which years, or vicissitude, or even a second wedded life never entirely healed. I go to bind them up. I also hasten my steps; for remembering his deep agony at the death of my beloved mother, I fancy I see him in the same grief-stricken position as at that period, but more helpless, because of the increase of age, and more desolate, because without a friend or daughter. I now fear no unwelcome reception; knowing well that though paternal love may have succumbed to a sway, exercised over him by rude violence rather than by the ardour of affection, yet could his kinder feelings toward the daughter of the wife of his early love never have been quenched. I also know that in his kind heart is contained the truest benevolence, and in his noble soul the most correct moral principles; to exalt which to the principles of religion shall be my highest aim.

"The letter you so kindly undertook to write will be now, of course, unnecessary. As the vessel sails

early in the morning, I shall have embarked ere you receive this. For all your labours of love to me I can never repay you. I hope they are recorded in heaven; and, unworthy as she is on whom they were conferred, I yet humbly trust that at that day for which all other days were made, and every word spoken on which shall sum up all other words, at that day I trust they will be showered back upon your head with the gracious announcement,—'Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of these, the least of my disciples, ye did it unto me.' If we meet not again upon earth, we shall meet at THAT DAY. May it thenceforth be to reign in the kingdom of bliss—farewell.

"Yours sincerely,

"MARIA MILLICENT."

LETTER XVIII.

My dear ,

It is indeed a strange perversity of our nature that we prize so lightly what is easily attained, so long as it is so, whilst we immediately magnify its value whenever it ceases to be within our reach. 'Tis as I expected: you now feel dissappointed at Miss Millicent's leaving Scotland ere you have seen her and yet had she remained here, it had, perhaps, been long enough ere you had come to town. I, however, sympathize with your disappointment, believing that Maria had begun to occupy some of your thoughts, and to fill, though perhaps unconsciously, a corner in those associations of matrimony, which I presume, whether at one time or another, hold a place in the breast of every son of Adam. But without further comment, I transcribe for your perusal the following letter:—

"Green Park House.

"My dear and kind friend,

"I hasten to tell you of the unexpected situation in which I now find myself placed; taking also the

liberty of asking your kind aid, or counsel, as may be required.

"Knowing, as I did, that my letter to my father must have reached Green Park House some days before my arrival; and finding no one waiting for me at the nearest *stage*, where we were always wont to meet our friends who travelled by coach, it was with an anxious breast that I approached the portals of my early home. I was soon, however, to feel myself more agitated and perplexed; finding, as I did, the house partially shut up, I also found that of all our former servants, the most of whom had been in the family from my childhood, only one was left, the late Mrs. Millicent having induced my father to part with the others. This one he had, however, tenaciously retained; happily he was one who for many years had possessed my dear father's confidence more than any other servant ever did; and he told me that latterly his master had felt great disquiet on my account.

"His solicitude, and, indeed, his deep distress of mind, about the writer, had, at the same time, become all but insufferable; when a few days after the interment of Mrs. Millicent, he found several, or nearly the whole of my letters in an old escritoir, all of which his wife had intercepted and prevented him from seeing, and, having by these gained some trace of the writer, he immediately set out for Scotland in search of her.

"The latest of these letters was written six months ago, and is dated from Mrs. Y.'s lodging, 10, N. Street. And as it is certain that my father will go there first, my object in writing you, my dear sir, is to ask you to enquire whether such a person as Mr. Millicent has been there, and if not, to leave the necessary information in case of him calling. I believe you will not grudge the trouble; yet I had not thus imposed upon your goodness, but from the circumstance of Mrs. Y. having, I know, left the house referred to; and not knowing who the present occupant may be, I am thus prevented writing myself, which I otherwise had done.

"I remain,

"Your's truly,

"MARIA MILLICENT."

Losing no time in visiting 10, N. Street, I was there informed that an English gentleman had called the day before, but that the mistress of the house being from home, he had not left his name. I then left my card with a memorandum that if Mr. Millicent, Green Park House, ——shire, called, he should be told that I wanted particularly to see him, and that I was in the hope of being able to communicate the information he was seeking. It, however, ocurred to me, that from the inadvertence of servants, or other causes, my hopes or purposes might yet be frustrated; wherefore I hastened back to the lodging-house, if possible, to make certainty more sure.

On approaching the door, a gentleman coming from an opposite direction entering along with me, the servant shewed us into the same room. On the mistress of which presenting herself, I said I was sorry for being so troublesome, but that my business with Mr. Millicent being urgent, I had taken the liberty to return, to urge that no mistake might occur in case of the gentleman calling again. At this, he who had entered along with me haughtily scrutinizing my movements, also frowned therewith. But heeding him not, I rose as cavalierly as possible, and intimating that I had nothing more to say, was about to retire; when the gentleman, still eyeing me scornfully, informed me that his name was Millicent.

"Of Green Park House?" I rejoined.

"The same, sir."

I begged him to accompany me, and I should, I said, give him the intelligence he wanted. But seeming to have more confidence in the information to be obtained from the landlady, than in mine, he scarce deigned me a reply, but inquired of her how he might obtain a knowledge of where the former occupant of the house now resided.

Excusing his want of respect towards me, which I knew must have proceeded from the peculiarity of his own, and his daughter's position, I again asked him to step along the street, and I would give him the information he was seeking.

He at last accompanied me out of the house, when I said I presumed he was in search of his long-lost

daughter, giving him the various particulars of which I was possessed, and asking him to accompany me, and to make my house his home during his stay in the city.

"Sir," he replied, his lips having convulsively, but silently, moved for some seconds, "sir, the intelligence you have given me is very dear; but, dear as it is, I had sooner wanted it, than for one moment sit beneath the roof of the man who dared but to lift his little finger to the reproach of my daughter."

As Mr. Millicent said this, he became more and more excited; and his countenance, notwithstanding the furrows of years, yet so much resembled Maria's lineaments on the night on which I first met her, that, though regretting his violence, I yet loved him more than before, the feelings of that first and indelible interview being all recalled to mind. I therefore hastened to inform him that I was not the person who I believed he suspected me to be, that my *moral* principles and my religion were of a different kind, and——

"Do not speak to me of your religion, sir," he indignantly interrupted. "You spoke of it in your letters, which, though I never answered, I was yet weak enough to read; but in doing so, this one thing I may inform you, that recognizing your writing on the address, I stained not my hands with them, but opened them with a knife and fork, and held them with a pair of sugar-tongs during their perusal."

"My good sir, you mistake——" I was again proceeding,

"I am aware, sir," he impatiently pursued, "I am aware that mortal man lives not who could bring actual reproach on Maria Millicent; but, sir, to me it is enough that he ever breathed a breath of scorn towards her; and in her father's sight no repentance can wipe that scorn away."

Admiring the warmth of his fatherly emotion, rather than being offended at his insinuations, I still begged Mr. Millicent to accompany me, assuring him that I had never written him on any subject whatever, and that I had much to tell him regarding his daughter. Becoming more tranquil, he at last listened, and after listening, was subsequently induced to accept my invitation to remain with me until morning, when he should leave Edinburgh at an early hour, being now all impatient to meet his daughter. He was, indeed, impatient of every other subject; and having exhausted nearly the store of my information respecting Miss Millicent, I at last told him that I believed the person who had acted so falsely to Maria must have regretted his conduct; that it must have been him who had written the letters which Mr, Millicent seemed to have held in such abhorrence. Referring also to the advertisement I had seen in the newspapers, I said that the gentleman doubtless desired to marry his daughter.

"Crush not the flower in the bud," he replied, "Sooner, sir, should I see my arm fall from my

shoulder-blade, than see Maria Millicent marry with the man who ever caused her to draw one breath in scorn or sorrow. But, enough! her mother's daughter has too lofty a soul to do so, however distant the day on which the deed of scorn was done."

Marvelling what Mr. Millicent's own sentiments were on the subject of religion, I said, Such I believed were now Miss Millicent's religious principles, that aside from other feelings, I doubted not she would marry no man who was not at one with her on that subject. For this information the parent, however, evinced no gratitude; wherefore I still proceeded to say, that by this change in his daughter, he would find that loveliness had become more lovely, and goodness greater and more gracious.

"Another Montague!—Both Montagues! 'Tis more than I can afford;" the parent with emotion murmured to himself, as if unconscious of my presence; but at last turning to me, "Besides Maria, sir, I had but another daughter, only one—*She* became an angel—too soon she became one, because sooner than I could spare her. The gem became too pure for the casket, sir—and yet a lovely casket it was —lovely to all, but most of all to her mother and to me. But, sir, when the soul began to commune with the skies, the body, as if holding a fellow-feeling with its immortal part, became impatient of physical drudgery; the pulse beat faster, as an hireling eager to accomplish its task; fever wasted the life-blood; and, one by one, each organ yielded up its function

—each reservoir dried up its springs.——Sir, they said it was the bursting of a blood-vessel; but ere this fearful crash occurred, the pitcher was broken at the fountain, and the wheel was broken at the cistern—each life-spring had stood still in its place; and except the *soul*, which yet beamed through her lovely, heavenly countenance, there was for a long period no life left."

I said I had heard Miss Millicent allude to the event; and that her sister's death had been severely felt by her also.

"Yes, sir, Maria then felt herself a lonely one. But Maria was young. The morning sunshine may bring round the drooping flower—that of noon never, for the dew hath then departed, and there is no fructifying influence left," he replied, the repressed tear falling, as if unheeded, on his cheek.

"Your departed daughter," I said, "seems indeed to have been too pure and too lofty—too *good* for earth. But if so much enjoyment was derived from such society in this sinful world, how much more may we expect from it when realized in the purity of heaven's atmosphere!"

"That subject, sir, is too vast—too awful—for humanity to contemplate. I pray you do not agitate me with it," my companion replied, a convulsive movement playing on his features, betokening the absence of hope in immortal youth.

Like Maria, there was in all Mr. Millicent uttered that strength of feeling which at once cleft itself a

way to your heart, whilst, as with her, there was also that air of native nobility which straightway constrained, or rather made you love, to yield each word the uppermost seat in your thoughts. And notwithstanding the acrimonious spirit which hostile circumstances were apt to call forth in the daughter as well as in the father, there was, or is, yet in both that greatness and that benignity which makes "every word a precept, and every action an example." We spent a pleasant evening, myself as well as the parent only regretting the absence of a third party.

In the morning, all was ready for Mr. Millicent's departure—all—except himself, who on each attempt to raise his head from the pillow, was overpowered with sickness, and I soon perceived the symptoms of a nervous fever, brought on, as I had no doubt, by excitement and fatigue. He attempted again and again to prepare himself for his journey, but in vain, and, indeed, ere long the malady became quite alarming, a circumstance of which he was himself aware.

With more firmness of nerve than, at that moment, I had supposed him capable, he said, "Tell me, doctor, if I am in absolute danger, and if so, if it be a case in which the senses are generally retained till the last—tell me!—for I have much to say regarding my dear Maria."

I said, I did not apprehend any danger; but, if he would allow me, I would write for his daughter.

"Maria! my injured Maria!" he replied, after having remained for some time silent. "But her, I

never wronged mortal. I make her all the reparation that is in my power; and I trust I have nothing else whereof to be ashamed in entering another world. I never had an enemy, for I have always been the friend, and never the foe of man; and if I have at any time offended any servant or any man by an angry word, I have restored him four-fold.—Yet, doubtless, nature shrinks back and shudders at the thought of death and the grave."

I was surprised, as well as shocked, to hear a person of otherwise enlightened sentiments express himself in such a manner; and I remarked that there is but one system efficacious enough to prepare—vast enough to satisfy—and light and lofty enough to cheer the soul under such a crisis—that infinitude alone could support it—and the price that is infinite alone discharge humanity's last account.

But the sick man, mantled in his own righteousness, felt no disposition to make that system his.

Hoping, however, that a daughter's reasoning, and the lustre of that daughter's piety might still, by the grace of God, reach the father's heart, I presently wrote Maria, informing her of Mr. Millicent's situation, and soliciting her earliest attendance at his sick bed. I therefore hope Miss Millicent will be here in a few days, when I shall write you again—Till then—adieu.

LETTER XIX.

My dear ——,

Will you not now pay us your long-looked-for visit, and judge for yourself whether I have added or exaggerated—have deluded you, or *am deluded* myself? Having now to inform you, that Miss Millicent, on hearing of her father's illness, losing no time in retracing her steps, is at this moment beneath my roof. An unlooked-for incident connected with which has just transpired. But I write in order.

I studiously avoided being present when the child and parent met. And long was their first meeting; yet few explanations or allusions to past times were, I believe, either given or received.

It was not until next day that Maria informed her father of the entire change in her religious sentiments and feelings; in doing which, she did not find that ready acquiescence or approval which she expected.

"Nay, Maria, my child, you have been the holiest and the best all your life; and give not way to this nthusiasm."

"My dear father, the religion of which I speak is not enthusiasm; it is true enjoyment, it is the realization of joys which imagination cannot picture."

"But the *change* you speak of, Maria, that in your case was at least unnecessary; you were already pure enough, and good enough to enjoy any amount of happiness, even were it as great as you say."

"My dear father," Maria answered with as much earnestness as solemnity of manner, "if any man be in Christ Jesus, he is a new creature—he has passed from death unto life. These are the declarations of Him who cannot lie, and who tampers not, nor exaggerates, with the children of men. And I, and every Christian, can declare that the change is as great as the language is definite and expressive."

Mr. Millicent, shielded in his own moral rectitude and works of charity, which I understand were great and multifarious above those of many, had been most impatient of such discourse, except from the lips of his own daughter. On her, however, his eye ever rested—to her words his ear ever listed.

"Do I not know, Maria, that a just God requires not more of us, than veneration of Himself, and mercy, truth, and justice towards our fellow-men?"

"The veneration of which you speak is not sweetened by that nearness to God which God permits this 'new creature' to enjoy. And do you not see, my father—do you not *feel* that our best works to our fellow-men, though affording the soul the highest of earth's satisfaction, yet cannot elevate it

above the things of earth. They afford it no communings with Deity, inspire it with no longings after immortality, and, hence, yield the immortal part no *material* for heaven, not to speak of their insufficiency to confer a title to it.

"Child! child! why is all you say so much more irsesistable than that which is spoken by any other? and why does each word you now utter, remind me so much of Montague?" was the parent's reply. "They are Maria's words, but the voice and spirit are Montague's," he murmured.

"Yes, father, I doubt it not that Montague's spirit is now hovering over us, waiting, watching for the joyful message with which to return to the throne of the living God—the message that a soul, the soul of her father, has now *turned* to the King Eternal, Immortal, and Invisible."

"No, child! no; her soul was tired of earth—tired of the ways of men, else she had not died at such an early day. She had not," returned the parent, vainly attempting to suppress the falling tear.

"Ha, father! but the spirit is now glorified; and though it may visit earth, it can no more be subject to earth's cumbrances," Maria replied. But though wishful still to press her suit, yet fearing she might lose her point by urging it too rigourously, the speaker changed her argument, though not the subject of it.

Notwithstanding the warmth of my friendship toward Miss Millicent, I had not, until the present, introduced her to my friend, Jane Watson; and I had now an opportunity of seeing them meet for the first time. I told you of their resemblance to each other, which, indeed, they seemed themselves immediately to perceive; for they looked at one another as a lady is apt to look when unexpectedly seeing her own image reflected in some obliquely placed mirror. They seemed also to see each other's heart and soul, being at once bosom friends. They could not, indeed, fail to see the radiance of their own heavenly love reflected on each other's brow, and to hear the notes of their own music in each other's song. The *proper* language of the heavenly Canaan is as gladly, as speedily, recognized by those journeying thither; which recognition also alike spurneth ceremony, distance, and reserve.

Of Miss Watson I have, however, made little mention in our correspondence, and for the simple reason, that occupying a sufficient share of my own thoughts, I conceived it unnecessary that she should occupy many of yours; and, but for an incident connected with her whose history I have more particularly attempted to give you, I had not even now introduced her name, going, as I do, on the principle, that the lover who wishes to hide his own weaknesses, ought, by all means, to keep his own secrets; for, methinks, neutral parties will laugh at what he weeps, and profanely pronounce that a molehill which

he soberly designates a mountain—the more's the shame that 'tis such an unfeeling generation. But, however much inclined, I cannot at present moralize on this subject.

The two ladies, accompanying each other to church on Sunday last, I received the following note by Monday's first post:—

"Sir,

"Unknown as I am to you, I yet hope you will bear with my seeming officiousness and intrusion, when I tell you I have for some time marked many of your proceedings—you will, I hope, bear with me, when I tell you that it was because these were, or seemed to be, narrowly connected with a circumstance in which I feel deeply interested, if not involved. But, before intruding it upon you, I beg to premise, that being a gentleman, I hope to receive the treatment of one at your hands; being, moreover, a *lover*, as I understand you also are, I beg to presume on that share of forbearance, if not of sympathy, which you will know a person so called sometimes requires.

"It is four years on the evening of the 10th of November since I first saw you. You were at the time in the act of addressing a lady of the name of Miss Millicent. Excuse me, when I say I marked you well. I saw your meeting, and I saw your parting, having followed you for the three hours in which you discoursed together. If you yourself recollect the interview,

I need hardly say I thought your conduct very unaccountable.

"Shortly after that period, I went to India. On my return, I was desirous, beyond endurance, to find the lady with whom I had formerly seen you, but was as ignorant of your residence, as of her or hers. I soon met, and immediately recognized you, however; and a lady of similar appearance to Miss Millicent being with you, and associating whom with your interview with her on the evening referred to, I at once presumed on the lady being the same; nor was I altogether undeceived, until having personally addressed her.

"On seeing the same lady in church, yesterday, however, with one whose person I cannot have mistaken in supposing it to be that of Miss Millicent; but being so distanced from them as not to be able to find them at the conclusion of the service, I have taken the liberty of enquiring at you if I am correct, and if so, where Miss Millicent is to be found. Having been informed of your connection with Miss Watson, I deem you the only party at whom I can make the enquiry.

"Any favour you may have to communicate, may be addressed to Y. *Z.*, Post Office.

"I have been thus explicit, or as you may think tedious, in the hope that you will deal frankly with me in return.

"Yours, &c."

Not knowing what to make of such a letter, I considered Mr. Millicent, as his daughter's only guardian, the fittest person to whom to shew it. I next thought of shewing it to Maria, this being more confidential; and finally, I concluded it were a violation of confidence to shew it to any one, until hearing further from the writer. I therefore replied, that Miss Millicent and her father were, and would be, in town for a few days; that I was well acquainted with them, but that I did not feel at liberty to give the private particulars of my friends to a stranger, at least not without first being allowed to inform my friends on the subject.

Mr. Millicent's convalescence having meanwhile improved so as to admit of travelling by short stages, and the parent becoming hourly more impatient to conduct his daughter to what he designated her *own* home, though one which, I perceived, *she* had many painful emotions in contemplating Perceiving these opposite feelings in the parent and child, I, as a dernier resource, informed the former of the communication I had had, stating also that I now conceived I had acted precipitately in the matter, and that——

But, without hearing one word more, my guest flew into a violent passion; raved about vulgar associations, and infringements on ancient pedigrees; contrasting these with what he termed the noble blood flowing in his daughter's veins; muttering also to himself sundry surmises and anathemas relative to trade and commerce.

"My dear sir," I said, "be calm—be at least patient. Let moral nobility grace the attribute in its lineal descent. The individual alluded to perhaps also can boast of noble lineage; and whether or not, he is, perchance, laying no claim to that of your daughter."

But our conversation was here interrupted by the entrance of Miss Millicent, being myself, also, hurriedly called away on professional duty.

On returning in the evening, and seeing all things in readiness for their journey, and at the same time judging from Miss Millicent's movements that her father had communicated to her nothing respecting the letter, I now thought it my duty to shew it to Maria herself, which I did, stating also the nature of my reply, and asking if I had acted prematurely.

"No—perhaps not. I should think not," she answered, much agitated.

But, perceiving that her words were at variance with her feelings, I said, I deeply regretted that any incident should have transpired to alloy her happiness, which had else been unmixed on returning to her father's house.

The tear falling from the eye, which seemed more subdued than I had ever seen it before, even in Maria's greatest debasement,—"Ah! my dear sir," she said, "so long as I have any being I must bless God, who hath not only given me a new name—one which is above every other name—but hath also provided me a home with the fulness of all things

for my sojourning below. Yet 'unalloyed happiness' can never be hers at whom the finger of scorn can still be pointed, however innocent she may be of the cause of that scorn; and whose heart and home must, moreover, ever remain in partial desolation."

Miss Millicent had never before termed me *dear*. It was also the first time I had ever heard her make any allusion to her heart, or to her home; nor could I help conceiving the present to be in connection with wedded life.—Shall I acknowledge it? A strange feeling came over me. Unconsciously, or at least inadvertantly, I responded, that, but for my peculiar position, I had considered myself an honoured man in being allowed to save such a heart from desolation, or in finding even the lowest seat in the home over which she presided. At this my companion's colour deepened, and she looked with surprise, but spake not.—"I hope you understand me, Miss Millicent," I timidly added.

Grasping my hand, but instinctively as it seemed; for, on reflection presenting itself, the hold was presently relaxed,—"I hope I *do* understand you, sir; and, but for your 'peculiar position,' which honourably enough you have not concealed from me, but for that position, do you suppose I had unbosomed myself with so much freedom hitherto; or, in the present allusion, do you for a moment dream that my feelings admit of a general lament, or that the incense of my heart could be poured on a substitutional offering?"

I don't know why, but I rose from my seat, and strayed to the window, where I was commencing a scrutiny of the passers-by. But, at this juncture, I was happily informed that a gentleman waited for me in the adjoining room. I say happily; albeit, on retiring, I fancied that Miss Millicent had some further communication to make, and I felt that so had I.

The gentleman waiting for me was Mr. Baynes, who, in words few and unceremonious, intimated that he had come to settle his bill before leaving town, which he was now so far recovered as to be able to do.

"Don't be *particular* in counting your guinea, and half-guinea visits, Doctor," he said, on seeing me open my desk. "Here is a bank bill, which, if you will just accept of, and be done with it, 'twill save trouble."

Looking at the amount of the proffered draft,— "Thank you, Mr. Baynes," I said; "but I cannot think of imposing——

"No offence, Doctor," my friend interrupted. "It's not worth the talking about. We country people, though making less *show*, have more money amongst our hands than——."

"Than you *town*-people," the speaker evidently intended to have said, when delicacy, or some other feeling, prevented; and not without considerable adroitness, he rendered a substitute for the concluding part of the sentence, by slightly cracking a new fancy whip which he held in his hand.

On my insisting on his accepting the *difference*, "Ha! I am for none of that small clatter," he replied, contemptuously eyeing the gold I had by this time in my hand to give him "in change." But at last assuming a more serious tone and demeanour, "If you won't accept it yourself, give it to the poor; for though not otherwise wanting in my payments, I am, I fear, far enough behind *there*. But aside from this, Doctor, I owe you more than money can pay, or words can tell.—And HER, Doctor!—She, whose words first softened my heart, the hardness of which had else resisted yours—Poor thing!" he tenderly added; "I was greatly *propensed* to offer her a five or a ten pounds note on the morning on which she so hurriedly left; but, though poor, as from her landlady I understand she was, and though few pretensions to wealth or greatness she herself made, yet, so it was, man, that every word she spoke sounded as if coming from a mine of gold, which not only made your heart cold when you wished to offer a coin of the same metal, but also seemed to involve the vain purpose of adding wings to the wind, or increase to the ocean. She was proud," the speaker musingly continued; "but that religion of *hers*——"

"Of 'hers,' Mr. Baynes!" I here interrupted; "must we not now say of *yours*, and of mine?"

"I hope—I hope we may; but it must be long, sir, ere my soul can forget its guilt, especially its cruelty to Anna Oliphant."

But here our conversation was interrupted by the entrance of a new visitant, who on Mr. Baynes retiring, introduced himself as Captain Norwood, intimating, also, that he was the writer of the letter respecting Miss Millicent, and that deep relative affliction had prevented an earlier call.

On informing him that the lady and her father were at present inmates in my house, he asked if he might be permitted to write a note, and to have it presented to Miss Millicent before leaving.

"Certainly," I said; "or perhaps you will leave your card?"

"My card!—Yes—no—you will merely say a particular friend," he replied, not without confusion.

But at this moment Miss Millicent, unaware of its inmates, entered the room; and the gentleman and I being seated on a couch behind the door, the lady had passed to the opposite side without observing us. On turning herself round, and facing my companion and me, she seemed petrified and speechless. The gentleman, after a momentary pause, sprang from his seat, though quickly bridling his steps, his movements became slower. Miss Millicent's colour now changed, or rather departed, and she seemed not unlike one who was going to faint, and fall upon the floor; to prevent which the other's arms were speedily proffered; but hereupon I arose, and sped me out of the room.

But my letter being already too long, I now bid you adieu.

LETTER XX.

My dear

In the conclusion of my last, I told you of my speedy flight from the meeting of Captain Norwood with Miss Millicent. Their interview was, however, short, that is not more than an hour, when the gentleman enquiring for me, asked if I would accompany him to the house of Mrs Dameson, which I readily did, asking as we journeyed thither, if he was furnished with any particular message to the lady.

"Yes—well, no.—I don't think I am; but she branded Miss Millicent with—that is, she said I had stolen the lady's purse, and her watch, and other jewels. And a *thief*, sir!—a plebeian crime!—a sordid nature! If she had called me a rascal, I could have borne it, for such I was."

I observed, that the charity which covered other sins, could perhaps cover this also.

"No, sir; few sins as there are of which a 'gentleman' is not oftentimes capable, this, at least, is one with which he may not darken his deeds, and ever again bear the appellation."

To this I had made no reply; but as if having made the greatest opposition to his sentiment,—"No, sir," the speaker added with still more vehemence, "no, sir; kindness may be engrafted on the stem where thoughtlessness and recklessness only were, but a better growth on that where sordidness was, *never*. Religion itself cannot do it. No, sir; religion may turn a rascible temper to the disposition of the lamb—its influence may cause love to grow where baser passions sprang—its principles may also implant integrity where dishonesty was, and inscribe justice on the beam where false balances were wont to hang—it may *change the nature*, and it *does* change it; but from the native meanness which could cause a rich man to steal, it never can emancipate it."

I said, it was indeed wonderful, that in the magnitude and comprehensiveness of the change which religion effects, so much of the old disposition should still remain.

"No, sir; 'tis, as I conceive, in accordance with the infinity of the system, that that system may have room for its operations. Grace does not gild that it may govern—does not annihilate that it may triumph over the imperfections of humanity," was my companion's reply, which, though in part discovering his perceptions of religion, left me in ignorance of whether or not he had realized its power.

Learning, however, that Miss Millicent, during her short stay at Mrs. Black's, had been robbed to a

much greater amount than I had supposed, I suggested the propriety of us going to Mrs. Black's, instead of Mrs. Dameson's, which we did; but on arriving at the place in question, found a different owner occupying the house; of the residence of Mrs. Black none being able to inform us.

Approaching the door of my own dwelling, my companion began to manifest a most irresolute spirit, afraid to encounter, and more reluctant to decline another interview with Maria. We had scarce reached the threshold, however, when a messenger accosted us, beseeching me to visit a woman in great distress, to whose residence Captain Norwood accompanied me.

Arriving at the top of a most lengthened "common stair," we found the sick one in a large, but scantily furnished, and as scantily lighted room, which seemed the only one bearing the marks of inhabitation in the whole multitudinous tenement. At her bedside was seated one in whom I soon recognised the Rev. Dr.——, one of our city clergymen. The doctor is one of those who, if you see once, you remember for ever; if you hear once, his words abide in your heart, and their meaning is henceforward reechoed on your soul. His head is white with years, but the fire of youth is in his eye; the dew of the morning is also on his lips, and in his deportment there is the kindness and the ardency of the "beginning of days"—there is more—the anxiety and the solemnity of a man, who seeing himself on the brink

of the grave, not only hastens to execute his task, but performs it with all the reverence of one who already has had a view of the other world. Awe-struck, and unwilling to disturb the solemn interview, we unconsciously stood on the threshold and listened.

"I have more to tell you, but I don't want to speak loud. Come near me. What are you feared for? You're paid for visiting the sick as well as for preaching; and if you *do* catch the infection, you're well paid for it."

"My God can keep me in the hollow of His hand. He is not only able to shield me from the air of contagion, but He *will* do so, if such shall be for my good. I am not therefore over much afraid of bodily disease; yet have I slid backwards from the breath that breathed the disclosure of such horrid crimes. Excuse me, my Saviour had doubtless lent a kinder ear to your dolorous confessions; that Saviour is now ready to receive you; and I beseech you, O woman! look to Him, not to me. Take your sins, many and dark as they are, cast them into the ocean of His bleeding love, where, cast in by the hand of faith and penitence, they will be as lead in the waters for ever. And deceive not yourself with the vain thought that this confession can wash away your guilt."

"That's just because you're feared to hear any more," returned the croaking voice which first saluted our ears, as we stood on the entrance of this horrible place—"that's just because you're feared to

hear me; but, as I said before, you're paid for it; and you *shall* hear me. I can't die without; and the police can't take me now—I wish they could. I'd a thousand times sooner go to the police-station, than lay another night on this bed of suffering."

"It is, poor woman,—it is a bed of suffering; but do, my fellow worm, be admonished, that with all its suffering it has yet a door of hope, with a Saviour inviting you to enter in. Whilst on the other side of the fragile and soon to be broken down partition, that now separates you from eternity, there is an angel with a flaming sword, and a just God whetting a glittering sword. There is—O! there is the devil and his angels, and a lake that burneth with fire and brimstone. In that place of torment there are also, it must be feared, many of those who by your instrumentality were turned aside from the path of virtue, ready to whet their teeth at you, and to pour the vengeance and the hatred of hell upon your soul.

A gruff and reckless acquiescence, accompanied with an oath, was the sick woman's rejoinder. And the venerable doctor, crouching within himself, seemed instinctively to push his chair to a greater distance from the speaker, who now taking a small black bottle from her pillow and putting it to her mouth, "I took that to give me courage, Doctor," she said, "and preach against drunkenness on Sunday if you will."

At this, as if by a simultaneous impulse, the Captain and I now stepped forward.

Sick and changed, and partly delirious, as were the accents of the invalid, I thought them not altogether unfamiliar; and dimly as the chamber was lighted, I soon recognized Mrs. Black as the author of them.

"Do not go away, sir, for I have yet more confessions to make, and I dare not sleep until I've made them," she pursued, addressing the Rev. Doctor.

"If you will hear me speak of my Master, I wait —and must wait; but if only to hear cursing and wickedness, I go—and must go," the Doctor replied, re-seating himself and laying aside his hat, which was by this time in his hand.

Having prescribed for my patient, and seeing her fix her eye on my countenance, "Do you recollect me?" I said.

"Yes! and your preachings too. I wish I had listened to them *then*. But don't repeat them, for I can't listen to them now. My mind is wandering; and when I even have a moment's reflection, it can comprehend no subject but what pertains to sin—it can realize nothing but fearful dreams and horrid appearances."

"And me! do you recollect me?" Captain Norwood asked.

"Alfred Ethrington! Thank heaven, you're yet a living man! 'Tis but an hour since I dreamt that your ghost stood before me, ready to wreak vengeance on my soul, for having laid the robbery of Miss Millicent on your head. I thought it followed me to

E— Street, and thence to this awful place. 'Twas because of this and other horrid apparitions that I sent for a clergyman, to whom to confess all my sins; lest the ghosts of all those I have wronged should stand before me, when I sleep the sleep of the grave, or even when I close my eyes upon this bed, on which the horrors of the bottomless pit seem already to be begun."

"Terrible indeed," I said, "must be such apparitions or imaginations. But you will not, as I heard on entering, you will not listen to this man of God, in telling you of Him who 'giveth songs in the night,' and whose blood washeth the conscience from those stains which are the ground-work of the guilt-stricken spectres which now haunt your soul, whether awake or asleep."

"Sleep! such sleep!" the sick contemptuously replied. "But you, Doctor, can't you prescribe something for this mental malady?—some medicine I mean—none of your preachings."

As it was a ghastly apartment for a single visitant, especially under such unhallowed associations, I said to the clergyman, that if it were no intrusion, my friend and I would wait until he made what other observations he had to offer; which proposal was readily assented to; the Rev. Doctor seeming to have an instinctive horror at being again left alone with the hardened woman.

"I will pray with you once more," he said, after having vainly attempted to impress her mind with various remarks.

"Yes! O yes! but your prayers don't cost you much."

"My poor fellow-mortal, what I am going to ask cost Him, from whom I supplicate it, much. It cost Him the agony and the sweat, the cross and the going down to the grave. And according to the price it cost the Son of the Eternal, will he who rejects it be judged."

Strange appeared the place, as the Rev. Doctor wrestled with God, and seemed lost in the intensity of intercession to Deity. I say strange, for I felt as if Satan were still in the midst of us.

We at last left the dreary apartment. The sick one's only attendant being the "parish nurse;" for the friend and acquaintance of the wicked abide not the stroke of calamity, but flee away when evil days come.

Our visit to Mrs. Black having been protracted much beyond what we had expected, the hour was late when I reached home, which made Captain Norwood demur at accompanying me into the house. He, however, did so; but finding from the servant that Miss Millicent, being slightly indisposed, had retired to rest, he tarried not, though readily accepting an invitation to dine with us on the morrow.

I now felt myself in a most communicative mood; wherefore I retired not to rest until I made this record, and having made which, I now repair to my couch, though not without once more commending to the Father of mercies her whose *weary* bed I have just left.

LETTER XXI

My dear

"Religion's all." It makes the proud humble, the vicious pure, the froward meek, and melts the indurated to the softness of love. It brings light out of darkness, order out of confusion, turns despair backward, and raises a mound of happy expectation where the pit of despondence else had been. The mantle of its charity covers the insult which no apology could have softened—the wrong which price could not repay—and the scorn which time itself could not have blotted out. Melting, in a divine crucible, the injury which conventional customs, honour, etiquette, human nature had felt it hard to reduce, it turns enemies into friends, the desolate into a family, and, by its wide-stretching arms, establishes also a community betwixt the rich and the poor, who had otherwise known no interchange of feeling—nor diffuses this happy combining influence only, but spreads a table of love for all, of the sweet participation of which the men of the world have no experience. It recalls the unthinking to his senses,

and restores the wanderer to his father's house. It brings back the captivity of him who was a slave of Satan, makes him a servant of the living God, and an heir of the kingdom of heaven.

Even in the social walks of life, religion furnishes interest to incident, incident to history, and connects history with the archives of eternity. It makes a new creation in the heart, a new world in the home, and a home, where cheerlessness and desolation alone had a dwelling place. But why enumerate, or whence find a starting point? It connects earth with heaven; and the cross, of which it boasts, is the grand junction where man and the God of heaven meet. And yet these number not the half of its heights and its depths, its treasures and immunities. As the gleanings of the grapes of Eshchol are they in reference to its blessings and its benefits; as a cloud rising like a man's hand when compared to its boundaries or its boundlessness.—" The theme surmounts an angel's pen, and Gabriel's tongue despairs.'

. A few of the traits I have now referred to have been more especially obvious in the short history I have anon to relate, and of themselves show that the Author of religion is also the author of peace and good-will to men—that religion with its flowing banners of love and mercy came from heaven, and that its object is not only to take its votaries thither, but to establish a heaven even in this vale of tears.

On betaking myself to my couch after concluding my last letter, I slept not, nor found repose. Mrs.

Black, unbefriended, labouring beneath the weight of bodily disease, and beneath the greater burden of her sins, yet resolutely grasping the latter as if tenacious of taking them with her to the other world, was still before me. Captain Norwood, with his many refined and noble traits; and Maria, subject to the remembrance of that scorn, which, however she might have loved, or may still love him, woman's heart must be yet slow in overcoming; these, with divers feelings of a more personal kind, prevented sleep, and made me glad when the day had dawned. What has since transpired has, however, furnished matter for the foregoing reflections.

On Miss Millicent entering the breakfast room next morning, I told her of Captain Norwood coming to dine, and that he would in all likelihood make an early visit besides.

"Indeed!" was the reply.

I also related the interview we had had with Mrs. Black, her sickness, her remorse, and her disclosure to the robbery of Miss Millicent, and her contrivances in laying it on the shoulders of Captain Norwood. But my auditor made no articulate reply; though the emotion that flitted on her countenance, and the tear that rolled in her eye, certified that she lent no deaf ear.

My first "call" was on Mrs. Black, who was now relieved from the partial delirium under which she laboured on the past night. Her heart, however, being as hardened as before, I bethought me of

Emily Dunn, with her soft accents and unsophisticated manners, and, above all, with the ardency which this young person now evinces to proclaim the way of pardon to the guilty. Bethinking me of her, peradventure the sick might listen to one of her own sex, I asked if she remembered Miss Dunn, or would accept a visit from her.

"No, sir, my sleep and my slumber and the darkness of night furnish me with visitants enow of that kind.—Innocent!—they said they were the innocent and unwary, whose steps I had been the means of alluring from the right path; but little innocence, I wot, was in the looks, and in the gestures of their spectres, as they menaced me in the broken and frightful slumbers of the two past nights."

"Miss Dunn," I said, "will not come to menace, but to tell you of the Saviour she has herself found —of Him who sought and saved Saul of Tarsus— who cast seven devils out of Mary Magdalene—and who readily conceded a kingdom of glory to a thief upon the cross."

"But can't you *cure* me *first*, Doctor? Just let me be in health now, and see if I don't attend to these things," was the reply, expressed in the most coaxing tones, as if to hold out a greater bait to my endeavours.

It was long since I had seen Miss Dunn, and bending my steps thither, I found with her Mr. Baynes, who had just called, he said, to see the companion of his late ANNA before leaving town.

They seemed, however, to be enjoying each other's society in a very peculiar manner.

On mentioning my errand, Miss Dunn seemed to recoil as from the presence of a viper; but reminding her that the person she was so much disposed to shun was not below the standard of those whom bleeding love had come to save, nor below the mark at which my heart and hers once lay, "I go," she replied, "and if I cannot do good to her soul, I may at least relieve her temporal requirements."

At this, Mr. Baynes covertly taking out his purse, and offering the contents of it for Mrs. Black's behoof, mumbled or grumbled something about the aversion of his friends to accept money, and the difficulty of getting quit of it.

"My dear sir," I said, "if you will accompany me, I will shew you scenes where the difficulty will be on the other side, for I will shew you the mother who has to listen to her child crying for hunger, which she cannot relieve, and the strong man whose arm has become weak, because his manly soul refused to beg the bread which he conceived he had a right to without asking.—I will shew you sickness neglected, age unsupported, and the young heart withering for want of food to eat."

"Is that possible, sir?" was Mr. Baynes' reply, which was made with such mingled simplicity and surprise, as if he had never before dreamt of want having strode upon the earth.—"And amid such fine houses too—and so many carriages—and such

grand churches and chapels—and the people who meet to bow the knee, and worship God therein, arrayed in such costly garments!" he continued, "and ——but there is a sovereign, give that to the man who would not beg, for, O! doctor, man! I commend independence."

Trusting to Miss Dunn to minister to Mrs. Black, I hastened to make my other calls; as not knowing what reception Captain Norwood might receive from Miss Millicent, in case of his calling in my absence, I was anxious to be home at an early hour.

The captain, however, as I understood, had been for a considerable time there before me. And on entering the house, I found Maria standing without the sitting-room door, earnestly urging something on his attention, though on my arrival, she hastily disappeared.

"I wished Miss Millicent to introduce me to her father; but she declines, and has been urging me to make my announcement myself," said Captain Norwood; whereupon I immediately performed the service. But Mr. Millicent, at the mention of the name, sat more erect upon his chair, and pushed himself more aside, as if desirous to increase the material distance betwixt himself and the introduced by the same ratio at which he evidently wished it to appear he had removed his mind and thoughts from the present company.

A short silence having ensued, "I am sorry to have to add, Mr. Millicent, that it is the same who first

brought your daughter to this place. Some parts of my conduct I have been able to explain. Of the whole that caused *her* pain I have long since repented; and having obtained Miss Millicent's forgiveness, I now come to ask yours.

I had risen to retire as the speaker commenced; but as he asked me to stay, I did so. Mr. Millicent sitting for some time silent, as if being at a loss to find vituperation sufficient to clothe his sentiments, "My indignation at your presence is too great to allow me to express myself, sir; and tell me not that Maria Millicent has forgiven you, unless you tell me that she has ceased to be her mother's daughter," he at last proceeded.

"I marvel not greatly at the feelings you have expressed, Mr. Millicent. Nor could I have expected Miss Millicent's forgiveness had not the change which she has, and which I trust I also have experienced, been that which implants a new heart, which measures forgiveness by infinitude, and which, though inducing more hatred to the evils of the world, yet digs a new well of charity, into which 'old things' sink and are unseen."

"Purity of heart induces hatred to crime, sir, —that is my religion—and I care for no 'change' that acts not so."

"That is a part of the change or of the religion of which I speak, Mr. Millicent; but whilst it shuns many of those liberties and confederacies of which the men of the world are cognisant, its outstretching

arms of charity yet offer forgiveness of the transgressions of the past, where the world, and the world's conventions, can afford no pardon, and in love have no resources—I mean no resources of the sentiment in its most exalted character—Christian love—which widening, and elevating, and immortalizing the principle, can look back with the more forgiving heart on such shortcomings as come not within the compass of this love."

"Do not tell me of love without honour, sir, nor of the forgiveness which compromises honour in its vouchsafement," Mr. Millicent indignantly replied. But a soft answer turneth away wrath;—it is seldom, also, that *hauteur* can stand long before Christian meekness and innate dignity. These traits were wonderfully exemplified in the captain, who being at the same time happy within himself, because of the concessions or assurances he had drawn forth from Maria, was in no mood to exact too much. Hence, before dinner was over, Mr. Millicent's sentiments and feelings towards his new acquaintance were quite changed. He even deferred his journey that he might dine with him next day (albeit this not until, from some remark that escaped the captain's lips, the other divined his alliance to nobility, and his right and title to certain lands connected therewith). Maria and I were included in the invitation; but the lady, who never lifted her eyes during the evening, respectfully but pertinaciously declined.

As has been already recorded, it was under the assumed name of Etherington, that Captain Norwood was first introduced to Miss Millicent, and also brought her to this city; a name which he had casually taken from some foolish adventure, in which he had been involved. And this, it seems, was one reason why he forsook the victim of his falsity, it having been, he said, his intention to acknowledge the deception, and, of course, to disclose his real name at the end of their journey; but that his moral courage shrunk before the native dignity and truthfulness of Maria; and losing respect for himself, for the unmanly conduct he had been guilty of, he supposed not but that the lady should necessarily lose all respect for him. His father, who had heard some exaggerated rumours of his son's intentions, having, at the same time, written him a prohibitory letter on the subject; he, in an evil hour, came to the resolution to leave Miss Millicent.

It was not long, however, until remorse, or better feelings, resolved him to retrace his steps, and cast himself at the feet of the injured. And he was, it seems, on his way to do so, when he accidentally saw her and me in conversation, and watching our protracted interview, he no longer believed that Miss Millicent's heart could be his, especially after having dogged my visit to Mrs. Black's next day.—Having, at the same time, made one deadly step over the boundary of moral rectitude, he found it the easier to make a second.

As weeks and months passed on, however, Maria's wrongs and her loveliness still stood before him.—And having made many fruitless enquiries for her, both at Mrs. Black's and by writing to Mr. Millicent, he at last put into the newspaper the advertisement formerly referred to. But still finding no trace of the lost one, he again joined his regiment, which shortly embarked for India. Here—

"In the land of the East, and the clime of the sun,"

the Sun of righteousness beamed upon his soul. He was brought to a true knowledge of that religion, which, as has been remarked in the commencement of this letter, is "ALL," which soon wrought in his mind new energy to seek and to save her whom he had so wickedly made desolate, and if not already provided with a home, to establish one for her. Thus actuated, and also now conceiving that the religion of Jesus has little to do with the sword and the bayonet, he resigned his commission; and on returning to England, lost no time in making those enquiries at her father which Mr. Millicent so indignantly communicated to me on our first interview.

Before enjoying the pleasure of dining at Captain Norwood's, I had to perform one of the many painful tasks that fall to my lot—to visit where sickness anxiously requires at my hand the health which no medicament can restore, and to witness death striding forth where the day of health has made no provision for his coming.—Visiting Mrs. Black, I found

her in a much lower state of animation than I had anticipated, and though delirium had now entirely subsided, she was yet subject to the most fearful imaginings. Her mind, which was naturally vigorous and acute, was, notwithstanding her weakness, still capable of the most minute perceptions. And hardening her heart against the upliftings of conscience, and the God-given guide still lifting up its voice, her mental warfare was indeed awful.

"Have you had a visit of Miss Dunn?"

"Yes, but she's no better than was the minister. Like him, she trembled, and would not listen to the half of what I had to say, but told me to *hush*, and go to Him the depth of whose mercy, she said, alone could grant me forgiveness, and the infinitude of whose blood alone could wash me from my pollution. But that's not what I want—I want to confess my sins to some one, and be *done with them*."

Awful as the latter part of this sentiment was, my mind being yet partly carried from it by solicitude to hear what confessions the unhappy woman had to make; I said that though to do so could afford her no standing relief, I was yet willing to sit and hear all she had to say. And I confess the recital of mothers who, through her instrumentality, had wasted their life-blood in yearning over their lost daughters; of fathers whose grief, too deep for complaint, had gone silently down to the grave; of brothers whose manly spirits had been broken; and of the victims themselves, the pangs of whose infamy

had only been lost in those of absolute misery—whose misery in this world had only been shortened by sorrow and sickness, hastening them to the misery that never ends; the enumeration of these, though I may not now recount them, was truly appalling, especially when associated with the quiver which at times convulsed the lips that gave them utterance, and the death-beats of the heart on which they still lay unrepented of; for the attrition which accompanied their confession could no more be termed true penitence, than the lifting of a dead man's limbs can be said to give life to his body.

But the dreadful wretchedness to which the hapless are exposed most of all filling my mind with sorrowful reflections, I asked myself the question, "Is Christian benevolence duly alive to the claims which such an awful amount of misery demands—if, in the comparatively few cases where material relief is provided, the moral debt is also paid—if they, in reference to whose *own* sins their 'Lord forgave them all,' are acting an accordant part to those whose iniquities that Lord also hath forgiven?" I asked myself the question, and contemplating the hardening as well as harrowing nature of *hopeless* and homeless misery, I have thus recorded it withal.

Truly the wages of sin is death. How cruelly does this world tantalize those who seek their happiness in it! How unkindly does it use its votaries, even in this its own heritage! It not only debases whom it fascinates, but scorns whom it debases. Fascinates!

—it takes no cognizance of the term but to tamper, whilst it turns back to mock the misery of the heart it has cheated, or to substitute despair for sorrow—the sorrow which it made to fill the place where happiness and virtue were. The men of rectitude *blame*, and they blame not more than heaven denounces the worker of iniquity. But whilst eternal justice testifies its indignation, it provides a way of salvation, and holds out welcoming arms to the returning penitent. No scorning, no upbraiding, no conservation for former debasement accompanies the blood-bought. pardon. Thus acts not the fellow-worm, acts not he who at morning and at even-tide prays that his sins may be forgiven as he forgives his fellow; thus acts he not, whether in regard to the *provision*, to the customs, or even to the forgiveness of this world. And thus the wretched, *robbed* of *hope*—hope—

> "...... The charm of life's bewildered way,
> That calls each slumbering passion into play,"

—feel no incentive to duty, nor energy to perform it. Despairing of ever regaining the respect of fellow-mortals, the individuals must soon lose respect for themselves, and, as no unreasonable sequence, soon lose it for their neighbour. Where there is no cognizance of moral worth, there can be no appreciation of moral excellence as it exists in others; whilst in proportion as the estimate of moral dignity sinks, will the feelings become less generous, and the pursuits

more degrading. With a galling consciousness of every man's hand being against theirs, it is but a part of human nature that theirs should be against those of every man. Hence let us sympathize when we reprove, be patient when repelled; and soften rather than aggravate the recklessness, the hardihood, or it may be the insolence we sometimes find in such characters. For marvel not if the spirit of departed honour, seated on its ruin with a sharp sword beneath it and above it, should attempt to throw back that sword into the breast of another; marvel not if petrified despair hath become stone—if wrongs, whether guilty or more guiltless, shall stamp brass upon the brow—if neglect, whether merited or undeserved, shall shield the heart with iron—or if scorn, the scorn which penitence itself cannot turn into a smile, encase it more in sin. Nay, marvel not if these, the Scorned, shall be led still more madly to despise Heaven's mercy, sinking the thoughts of eternal punishment in that self-infliction, the misery of which has been deepened and aggravated by the contemptuous bearing of a fellow-mortal. Let us therefore scan the cause in all its weavings whilst we look at the conduct in all its aggravations. Let us especially beware of mocking destitution, by saying, "Why stand ye here all the day idle?" whilst no man hath hired, or whilst conventional customs (however proper in themselves) preclude the support of the individual. Above all, let us not insult heaven's free unfettered plan of redemption, by offering

heaven's priceless, but unpriced medicament, whilst *our own* scorn corrodes the wound we seek to heal. Let us beware of invoking heaven's anger on our heads, by offering heaven's mercy with a hand the finger of which yet points downward to some social mark up to which the penitent may come—may come—but no farther——.

I have digressed. Let the feelings awakened by my patient's recital of wrongs, of sin, and of woe, excuse me. Our correspondence coming to a close, let it, moreover, be an apology, that that which was first in it should also be last, and that a subject involving so much misery in this world, and paving the way to the misery that never ends, should darken the page which haply might have concluded with a fairer subject and more graceful characters.

But, absorbed as I was in these meditations, my mind still reverted to the unhappy individual from whose statements they had originated. I had felt the tread of dissolution in her pulse, and the glass-work of death already stiffened her eye-balls. After making one or two other "calls," I therefore again wended my way to her cheerless abode, peradventure she might listen to the words of mercy when the door of mercy was now on its hinges, ready to be for ever closed. "You are dying," I said, in plain words. "Already your barque is sinking in the waters of death: will you not lift up your soul and lay hold on those oars of mercy to which, of late, you have been so often directed?"

"That's just to frighten me now; but I'm too old for that, and I won't be *cozened* over to your religion by any such fears."

"Only listen to me," I said.

"No, for it makes me tremble and shudder. Nurse, the brandy and water——Doctor, why can't I swallow——and this weight upon my chest—can't you re—remove it——and my brea——

A convulsive movement now passed over her countenance. Was it that that revealed the consciousness that "THIS IS DEATH?" was it that mysterious process in which the angel of death takes possession of his ward, or in which the more than earthly sorrow or joy that awaits it in the world unseen, is already begun? Was it these, or the sense of some mystic transition, the nature of which, mortal was never enabled to tell; for strange things seemed at that moment to have been revealed to the dying, and awful was the earnestness that now clothed her every feature!

"Am I dying? Doctor, keep it down—it is coming up——Doctor—I see—I see——"

"What do you see?" I said. But she had passed that stage of mortality at which articulation never returns; and, after breathing heavily for half an hour, her soul returned to Him who gave it.

On the morrow, Mr. Millicent and his daughter proceeded to London, Emily Dunn attending the latter. Certain unpleasant associations attaching themselves to Maria's mind at thoughts of revisiting

her father's house except in wedded life, they are to remain some time in the English metropolis, where Captain Norwood shortly joins them.—The sequel you can read without the writing.

On Miss Dunn's English sojourning being intimated to Mr. Baynes, the gentleman, after a brief space of silent meditation, expressed his desire to see Green Park House, Mr. Millicent good naturedly asking to whom they were to be indebted for the honour and pleasure of such a visit, "whether to Miss Dunn or——"

"I'll tell ye when I come," was the reply, the speaker glancing round the company with an air of supreme wisdom, as if to say, "Behold how I keep you in the dark!"

Ere twice the sun shall rise and set, I hope to call my dear Jane Watson my own. I shall thenceforth have other occupation for my leisure moments, and you must not expect any further communications from me at present:—For why—the days of my celibacy are ended.

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